

TWENTY FIVE
SERMONS
BY THE
Right Reverend
Father in GOD,
RALPH BROWNRIG,
LATE
LORD BISHOP
OF
E X E T E R.

Published by
WILLIAM MARTYN, M.A.
Sometimes Preacher at the Rolls.

The First Volume.

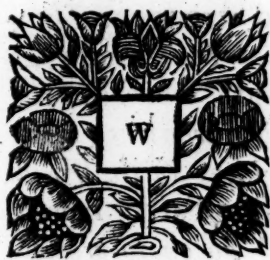
L O N D O N,

Printed by R. E. for R. Chiswell, T. Sawbridge, G. Wells,
and R. Bentley, and are to be sold by the Book-
fellers of London, MDC LXXXV.

To His Most Sacred Majesty,
CHARLES II.

By the Grace of God,
King of Great Brittain, France, and Ireland,
Defender of the Faith.

Most Gracious, and Dread Sovereign,



E read in the Book of Samuel, that the Sons of Belial brought no Presents to the King. That I may not be thought to be one of that accursed crue, I here present to your Sacred Majesty (though not so soon as I desired) the Sword of Goliah; which I found wrapped up in a cloth, I mean in those Sheets of Paper, which that incomparable Prelate RALPH BROWNRIG, late Lord Bishop of Exeter, left to me, when he left the world.

As the man was, so was his strength. With it You may see him cutting off the heads of the uncircumcised Philistines, all Regicides and Violators of Kingly Majesty, forcing out of their hands those dreadful Spears of Excommunication, and Deposition, whereby those Sons of Anak have, under several pretensions, endeavoured to tilt off the Crown from the Imperial Heads of Sovereign Kings and Princes, so to tumble them and their honours into the dust of either Papal Usurpation, or Popular Confusion.

If Your Sacred Majesty shall be pleased to make use of the same mighty Sword, You will find it to be Rhomphæam bis acutam, double-edg'd, and such, as whereby You may prove truly victorious, nay, more than Conquerour over the most malignant Enemies, and Enviars of Your Peace and Salvation, even the great Goliah of Hell, and all his adherents. Of such unresistable power is the word of God, when dispensed by skilful and faithful Preachers; by Preachers, who (besides their general, Ministerial sufficiencies) are sanctified by an experimental insight into the great Mystery of godliness, and well-Schooled in the secret passages and practice, of that high and supernatural Science of saving Souls.

These, these, are the only Angels upon Earth, the Embassadors of God, His publick Agents in the Church about the Affairs of Heaven, and Salvation of men. Yea, and these, under God, will be the chief strength of Your Majesties Kingdoms; however they may
be

The Epistle Dedicatory.

be made the ordinary and eminent Objects, whereon Prophaneness and Policy, Sacriledge and Superstition, Hatred to be reformed, and Romish Conformity, will execute the extremity* of their rage and passion.

These are the Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof; as Joash, King of Israel, acknowledged Elisha to be. These were they, that strengthened the Kingdom of Judah, and made Rehobam strong three years. When Jehoshaphat had taken special and particular care, that there might be such preaching Ministers in all the Congregations within His Dominions, and had sent his Princes and Nobles to countenance and encourage them in their Ministerial employments, 'tis said, that Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly.

So shall Your Sacred Majesty, in despite of God's, this Church's, and Your enemies, like David, wax stronger and stronger: They, like Saul, shall wax weaker and weaker; while You become at once both Charles le Bon, and Charles le Grand; which was the Completion, or Summary of Your Royal Father's wish, who was (while he lived) the Diamond in the Ring of all the Princes in the World. Yea, and You shall approve Your self to be a Nursing Father indeed, if You shall (as You have most graciously begun) go on to promote into Episcopal and Parochial Charges, men enabled for powerful and practical Preaching, eloquently Learned, and loyally Religious.

The Souls of Your People throughout Your Kingdoms, will bless Your Majesty here and hereafter, for Your Pious and Princely care in this particular; and God himself (whose Vice-Roy You are) will mercifully own it, as a Real Testification of that gratitude, which is due from Your Majesty to that Almighty King of Glory for those astonishing successions of unparrall'd deliverances, which His Everlasting Arms reached out unto You, when You were in the depth and desperation of Dangers.

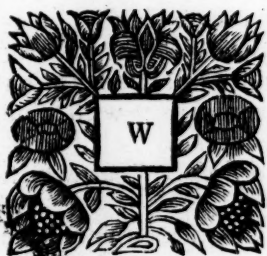
My Lord, O King! You have the Honour (and that most deservedly) to be stiled A merciful King; and I shall in particular proclaim You to be so, if You shall graciously hold out Your Royal Scepter, that I may touch the top of it, and so receive a full assurance, that You freely and fully pardon this bold Address of

Your Majesty's most

Loyal Subject,

WILLIAM MARTYN.

TO THE READERS.



H O the *Author* of these *Sermons* was, you are not now to learn: But this you are to be informed of, that once His Lordship never intended they should be made thus publick. He infinitely disliked the bold and ambitious Humor of such, as can speak nothing in the *Pulpit*, but presently they must with it to the *Press*. Yet His Lordship having freely, and of his own accord, promised His Papers to me, I obtained of Him, by variety and iteration of strong importunity, leave to send some of them abroad into the World. And, I think, 'tis very well, that now they are so, that the World may know, that pious practical Preaching, and Prelatical Dignity are not inconsistent. Yea such, and so extraordinary were His Ministerial sufficiencies, as that I dare adventure to challenge all censors, and let them tell, if they can, where those *Sermons* are to be found, in these last vapouring and perillous times, that they can every way parallel these of this most accomplished *Bishop*.

Peruse them thoroughly, and you will find them to be woven out of a feeling, full, and fluent Soul, by the strength of *Meditation*, supported and sinew'd by the true, natural, and necessary sense of the Word of life, managed with the mighty and incomparable Eloquence of the *Scriptures*, enforc'd with the evidence and power of an holy and humble Heart, a wise and a warm Spirit. And to a good *Christian*, that truly relisheth spiritual things, one such Sermon is more than a world of Declamatory Discourses, which are works only of memory and reading, not composition (as is commonly conceived) of true and judicious *Learning*, solid and saving *Divinity*.

I shall forbear to say any thing of this mighty Prelate; or to tell you, He was one of the greatest Lights that ever the Church of *England* enjoyed, both for soundness of *Learning*, sincerity of *Judgment*, and insight into the *Mysteries* of *Christ*; but shall refer you to that Character that hath been given Him, by His Lordship's Right Reverend, and worthy Successour, *John*, now Lord Bishop of *Exeter*, in that *Funeral Oration*, which he hath presented to the World, as the first Monument of Bishop *Brownrig*, who died in an Age least worthy of his Life, though it much needed him.

And yet, methinks, I cannot hold; but must say four words, and I have done.

One is this; Such was the high Esteem, that this eminently Wise, Learned, Pious *Bishop* had of our English Liturgy, that His Lordship earnestly professed to me, more than once, that it could not be expected to see *Religion* prosper and flourish again amongst us, till that excellent *Book*, so full of holy and humble Prayers, were (as to the substance of it) re-established, and the use of it enjoined in all Churches within his Majesties Dominions.

Another shall be this; So great was his care to keep himself close to the Texts His Lordship preach'd upon, that, in the composition of His Sermons, His Study and Endeavour was to bring Matter out of the Text (they were His own words) and not Matter to the Text, as is the manner of too many of the great and popular *Sermocinatours* of these loose Times. And this (among other Excellencies conspicuous in His Lordship's Sermons) gained that general acceptation they met with every where from the most pious and judicious Auditors.

A third Word, let be this; In the execution of His Ministry (to use His Lordship's

To the Reader.

ship's own expression) He was not wont to shoot over the Heads of His Hearers, nor yet to hit them full in the Eyes: but his main desire, and endeavour was, if it were possible, to reach their Hearts. Wherein His Lordship manifested much spiritual Wisdom, and holy Discretion; and withal, the sincere and earnest longing he had to work Remorse, and Meditations of Repentance and Return, * upon mislead and sensual Souls, and fairly to woo disaffected Passions unto the Love and Pleasures of the ways of God.

I have but one *Word* more, and 'tis this; Such were His Lordship's serious preparations for Death, that three years before (among other secret passages, concerning the state of his own Soul, which he readily communicated to me) He was pleased in private to tell me, that He had made a good progress in that greatest and most important work; and that in a short time (through the grace of God) He should finish it, and so would spend the remainder of His days in an humble and hourly expectancy of his *Dissolution*. Whereupon we may with some confidence speak it, His Lordship had nothing to do, when he received the last Summons to remove from hence, but only to compose Himself to sleep in *Jesus*, which His Lordship did most sweetly and contentedly.

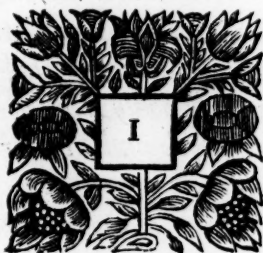
O righteous Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth! We poor Creatures, might have thought, if it had stood with Thy most Holy Will and Pleasure, that it had been much better for thy poor distracted Church (especially in that juncture of time) if his Life had been spared, and preserved with the loss of many of ours: But Thy will was otherwise; to which, as best, we humbly submit.

O, that the Church of God may never want such a *Reverend Father*, such a *wise Governour*, such a *mighty Defender* of the Truth of our *Protestant Religion*, and the pure *Articles* thereof; such a *powerful Preacher*! This shall be my great request to Him, who is the *great Bishop of our Souls*. And, I hope, there are yet many thousands that will join in this petition with him, who is the most unworthy of all, that ever served at the Altar,

WILLIAM MARTYN.

TO HIS
REVEREND FRIEND
Mr. MARTYN.

Reverend Sir,



Should not have taken that freedom with your Papers, if you had not given me your friendly encouragement ; or if I had not as much confidence of your Ingenuity, as I have commendation of your Industry, in applying your self, with so much pious improbity, to those pains, which were necessary to the mature and meet production of those excellent Sermons ; which being first devoted to the service of the King of Kings, are indeed worthy to be presented to the Majesty of the most renowned King under Heaven : being the precious Remains of that incomparable Bishop, my immediate, much admired, and justly emulated Predecessor ; who was blessed with the wit and wisdom, the fulness and freedom of true Eloquence ; not popular and Professorian, but grave and generous ; where neither excellent Subjects, nor suitable Expressions were wanting.

As I ever admir'd His Lordship's happiness, who enjoyed (uberrimi ingenii beatissimam facundiam) a clear Mind, and a ready Tongue ; so I cannot but gratulate your Honour, in being an instrument fitted by Providence, and specially designed by the wise and venerable Author, to bring forth this divine Work with such discreet diligence, as it deserves : That, while it blesteth the World with rare Jewels, these may be set off with all the advantages, which may make them most welcome ; especially since they are capable to put us all, both Bishops and Presbyters, to the blush, whoever pretend to preach most, and best : (O, how ill will those evil and envious Eyes bear them, who either neglect or disdain that Apostolical Duty of Preaching, where God calls and enables to the Duty !) However this benefit we may all reap by our just abashment, that we shall henceforth enjoy so noble Patterns for our future imitation and improvement : where, seeing our Defects in His holy Excesses, we may amend our selves without any diminution to His Perfections ; receiving Light from that which dazleth us, and Lustre from that which eclipseth us.

*I heartily wish, That the dew of Heaven may always fall upon these holy
a Reliques,*

Reliques, That such a spirit may attend the Reader which did the Speaker (which was at once weighty and warm, profound and pathetick, full of potent Demonstrations, and pregnant perswasions.) That while they are seriously perused, they may be fully digested by the unfeigned Belief, humble Obedience, and fervent Love of those holy Truths, those pious and ponderous Instructions, which shine in them with such a pleasurable profit, of learned Zeal and eloquent Devotion; that, I confess, never any Sermons, ancient or modern, more affected me, both hearing and reading, with all variety of Intellectual, Moral, and Spiritual Contentments. To me St. Chrysostom and Chrysologus, Sr. Basil the Great, and Gregory of Nazianzum, seemed to be revived in this one, acute, elegant, and Heroick Preacher: the richness of whose Vein, still posed the attentive Hearer, as now the Reader, to consider whether his Invention or Judgment, His Elocution or Devotion, His Solidity or Sanctity, were most to be admired in His Preaching or His Writings, who ever chose excellent Texts, and so handled them: (only his grave and goodly Presence gave a greater Majesty, Life, and Emphasis to his Speech and Matter, than can be represented by any dead Letters or Characters.)

O Happy Church of England! beyond the envy or obloquy of Superstitious Romanists, Presbyterian Acephalists, and Independent Fanaticks, if it might be ever blest'd with such Bishops; whose real accomplishments overmatched the first in their Learning, the second in their Preaching, the third in their severest Sanctity. However they might exceed Him in sinister Policies, Semblances, and Subtilties; yet, as to real sufficiencies, none of them was so presumptuous, as to be his Rival; no, not in their own Fancies. So much did morose Non-Conformity, and Anti-Episcopal fury (the first in its more sober; the later in its Bacchinal, or Frantick Drefs) dread to appear in the presence, or enter the Lists with this mighty Man; than whom, no man better distinguished between true Religion, adorn'd with orderly decency; and pompous Superstition, loaden with empty formality; between Ceremonies, fondly swelled to the substance, or Diseases of Religion; and modesty waiting upon it, as comely shadows; inseparable, as our Skins in their common nature; yet variable, as our Cloaths in their particular Fashions and Distinctions.

This learned, judicious, and godly Prelate, owned God alone, as the sole Law-giver, and appointer of the substance of his own Way, and of our Duty: what either might savingly instruct the Mind, or Morally move the Will, or necessarily bind the Conscience; God alone knowing what will best please Himself and most profit us. Hence no man was a greater Vindicatour and Veneratour of the Holy Scriptures, against Romish Innovations, and Fanatick Delusions in Opinion and Practice; which were either contrary to the Tenour of the Scripture-Rules, or deviating from the Catholick Custom of the Church of Christ, consonant thereunto.

On the other side, no man more asserted the Prudence, Liberty, and Authority of this (as all Churches) within their respective Politicks and Communions, to chuse and use; yea, to prescribe and impose upon themselves, by publick consent, such particular Forms and Modes of external Solemnity, Order, Reverence, and Decency, as he believed was allowed them by the Word of God; and no less certainly, in Publick Worship, left to the publick Wisdom, and Sovereign Power in Church and State; than is in private Closets and Families, permitted to every single Person, or domestick Governour, to whose discretion Time, and Place, Manner, Measure, Vesture, Gesture, and the like outward modifications of Duties are left by the Indulgence of God, under that general Direction, Let all things be done decently and in order; without any precise command, limiting or enjoining, all or any Churches, in those Circumstantials, and Ceremonials of Religion: Provided they agree with common Civility, and Christian Charity; neither against Faith, nor Holiness. He thought Ceremonies to be only as the garnish of the Dish; neither the Meat, or the Sauce of Religion.

Not, that this wise and learned Bishop (with whom I have oft discoursed about these things) did think, that the Liberty and Authority of the Church had any power, by its determination, as to any particular use, and uniformity of these Circumstances and Ceremonies, in the publick and solemn exercise of Religion, to change the nature of them, or to impose them as holy, necessary, and immutable, upon the Judgments, Consciences, and Practice of Christian People, as by any intrinsecal antecedent, or divine necessity in them; which were a falsity and delusion not to be imposed on the minds of people, and consequently both the imposition, and use, or practise of them, under that notion, would be erroneous, superstitious, and irreligious; But the Church fully and freely declaring (as the Reformed Church of England hath oft done) according to Truth and Charity, it's esteem of the nature and use of such things; First, as free in themselves; Secondly, as no essentials of Worship, or necessary Ingredients to the service of God, by any Divine Command; Thirdly, as no way mysterious or religious, by any significancy, as importing or conferring special Grace (which nothing of outward Sign can properly signifie, imply, or convey; unless it hath a Divine Precept and Promise; God only instituting the means or signs, who can give the Grace.) Fourthly, as left at large by God to the prudence of every Church to choose, and use them, as it sees most expedient; signifying and importing nothing more in their use and injunction, than the divine indulgence to Christians beyond the Jews, in point of Ceremonial exactness, and so the Churches Liberty and Authority in these things; and, Lastly, the Duty of every particular Christian, according to their Relations and obligations to several Churches, not to change their Minds, as to the Nature of such things; but yet humbly to be subject, and actually to obey their Superiours in these things for the Lord's sake; according to that Humility, Charity, and
a 2 *Peaceableness*

Peaceableness which consists with true Wisdom and Holiness, and which is by God required of every Member in those holy Bodies. The nature then of these things He judged still (as it truly is) free, in point of any necessity, having no Divine Injunction: But the use of them he thought no longer free, during the Church's choice, consent and command; whereto our peaceable Obedience and orderly subjection in such things, is founded upon both right Reason and the general Rules of Religion in God's Word, as to the outward Order, Polity, Peaceableness, Decency, and Conformity to such Customs and Canons Ecclesiastical, as are enjoined by Supreme Authority, and approved by the wisdom of the whole Church, as to its own parts and precincts, without any prejudice to other Churches.

With this calmness and clearness was this holy Bishop wont to state those popular and petty Disputes about Circumstances and Ceremonies. As to the Liturgy of the Church of England, you have, with me, set forth his Judgment, full of honour and esteem; not, that he was a rigid Verbalist, as to Words and Phrases (which as the Barks and Leaves of Trees, may change with age and time, while the Tree is the same:) But, as to the Matter and Method of it, he ever highly approved it, as very apt for the Divine Offices, for the Peoples edification and union. I am prone to believe, the Church of England might have had its peace at a far cheaper rate, than now it is like to gain it, if this Great and Good Man had lived to have over-awed the petulancy, and confuted the popular Sophistry of some rigid and endless Disputers, who, of all Arts, are hardest to learn that of ingenuous Retraction and sober Retreats, from their former Errors and Transports. Nor can you wonder at their restiveness (even after some variations are consented to; yea, after God's confutation of their preposterous presumptions) when you consider how much many of them are engaged in point of Reputation, and how dear that is to men, who weigh their Credit with their Consciences; yea, and put it into the Scales against the publick peace of Church and State, which, next God's glory, and our Souls salvation, should be dearest to every honest and good Christian.

I cannot but deplore with you, and all moderate men (yet with, submission to the Divine Will) the inestimable (and if I may say so after the manner of men) the unseasonable loss of this excellent Bishop; who departed out of the Chaos and Midnight of our English World, just as the Day of our Restitution began to dawn; when horrid Rebellion, Usurpation, and Sacrilege, had run themselves out of breath, and quite off their legs, into an Egyptian Mist of horrible Darkness, and Bog of Confusion, after a long tedious, giddy, cruel, and most deformed pursuit after Reformation in Church and State; for so it was at first pretended by all the Actors in our manifold Tragedies; till Hypocrisie grow-
ing

ing as impudent, as impious, cast off its Visors, when it had got the Sword into its Hand.

No man better knew the just Standard of Religion, and all Church-Affairs, than this learned and Religious Bishop did; both for Doctrine, Devotion and Discipline, for Faith and Manners, for Truth and Peace, for Sanctity and Solemnity, for good Order and Government, for Edification and Decency. No man better understood what was best; nor better expressed what he well understood. No man was abler to give good Counsel, or readier to obey good Laws. No man more zealous for just and sober Reformations, where any decays were owned by publick Wisdom, and Supreme Authority, or evidenced by private humble Remonstrances from God's Word, and the Laws in force: Because he knew Religion to be, as a very weighty, so a verry tender business, the great Concern of that God who is at once jealous for his own Glory, and solicitous for Man's Salvation. Nor may either the Traditions and Infirmities of Men, or the Prejudices and Presumptions of Time, contend with God's Word, or hinder the great designs of true Religion; which cannot be carried on, but in Conformity to the Word of God, which commands, as our exact obedience to Divine Precepts and Institutions, in point of Truth and Holiness; so our submission to the Churches orderly appointments, in point of Peace and Decency, as to things of indifferency, that are not punctually enjoyned or forbidden by the Word of God.*

Hence it was, that no man (on the other side) was a more severe reprover and condemner of those private and pragmatick Spirits, which were prone rudely to obtrude either their Fancies, or their Affronts and Contumelies, upon the publick Liberty and Authority of the Church; meerly upon this presumption, that they think themselves, and their petty Parties, wiser than Church and State, Kings, Parliaments: As if the majority of the Church and Nation, could do nothing well, till they either ask counsel of these new Masters, or get leave of these grand Dictators, to execute what free Parliaments have enacted, and National Synods have advised as best for publick Piety and Peace.

The truth is, no Bishop of late years (since those admirable Prelates, Usher, Morton and Hall) hath made a greater Breach in the stability, honour, health, and safety of the Hierarchie of the Church of England, by their deaths, than this ample Person; who had equal strength, courage, and dexterity to do all things, which became a good Man, a good Christian, a good Minister, and a good Bishop. The first repair for this great loss the Church will owe to your pains, who restore to us something, yea, much of his divine Soul and Genius in his Sermons. I pray God, His and those other Bishops personal absence may be so supplied by us, their Successours, that no great vacancy, or defect may appear, as to their Learning, or Living; their Piety, or Charity; their Preaching, or Ruling; so far as God gives us ability, and the Law authority.

For

For my particular (who am under a double affliction: First, to have lost so excellent a Friend and Father: Next, to succeed him both in the Temple, and the Diocess of Exeter, with so great disproportions to his Worth) yet amidst my private dejections, and publick dissatisfactions, I confess, I have still some welcome reflections in reference to this excellent Bishop. First, I joy to have lived in the Age when this grand Example lived; as Plato did, that he was coetaneous with Socrates; who made Virtue visible and useful to the World. Next, I remember, with great content, that particular favour and friendship, which for many years I was blessed with, from this most affable and courteous Bishop; whom no Honour leavened, no Diminution debased. Lastly, I rejoyce, not only to have perused His Manuscripts (or *Αὐτογέγραφα*) which I had some Months with me; but now also to read His elaborate Works in this exact Edition, which your meritorious diligence hath adorned. For which the better World will greatly thank you; though the worser, having most need of them, hath most cause so to do: For if any Man, since the Apostles, were able to cast out the most profane, petulant, and pertinacious Devils, this great Apollos, this mighty Prelate and Preacher, both in word and deed, would have done it, while he was living, both in the sanctity and severity of His private Conversation (set off with all serenity and sweetness) and most of all, by the Thunder and Lightning of His Preaching; where no man was so blind, as not to see the light of his Reasonings; no man so hard or stupid, as not to feel the strokes of His Impressions: Nor do I doubt of parallel effects (with God's blessing) to be wrought by these holyprinted Charms, wherewith you have enabled him to speak being now dead. For which commendable industry and charity, that your reward (as His now is) may be from the most High God, as well as from His great Vice-gerent, our most gracious Sovereign (a King of so many Prayers, Mercies, and Miracles) is the hearty desire of,

S I R,

Your loving Friend, Fellow-

Servant, and Brother in Christ,

J O H N E X O N.

JUNE 12.
1661.

An Advertisement.

TO prevent all Mistakes, in so publick a Concern, as the genuine Works of the Right Reverend Father in God, *RALPH BROWNRIG*, late Lord Bishop of *Exeter* (my most worthy Friend, and immedate Predecessor) the perusal whereof (so far as they then could be got together) was by Mr. *Thomas Buck* (His Lordship's sole *Executor*) committed to me: These are to testifie, that these *Sermons*, written by His Lordship's own Hand, and perused by Me, were delivered to Mr. *William Martyn*, according to His Lordship's design and desire, in order to have them published, as now they are; nor do I know of any other to be own'd, as authentick and complete.

JOHN GAUDEN, Bp. of *Exeter*.

IT pleased the Right Reverend Father in God, *RALPH BROWNRIG*, late Lord Bishop of *Exeter*, by particular Direction, under His Lordship's own Hand, to Mr. *Thomas Buck* (His Lordship's sole *Executor*) to dispose of all His *Sermons*, *Notes of Sermons*, *Papers*, *Paper-Books*, to me *William Martyn*, with liberty to print what I should think good. These are therefore to give notice, that if any have borrowed, or by any other means have obtained, any of His Lordship's *Sermons*, *Notes of Sermons*, *Papers*, or *Paper-Books*, wherein any of His Lordship's *Works* or *Exercises* are contained, that they are (of right) to restore them into my Hands; and hereby are desired to leave them, for me, with Mr. *John Martyn*, Stationer, at the Bell in *St. Paul's Church-yard*, to be disposed of by me, as His Lordship directed me.

Here in this *Volume* are such *Sermons* of his Lordship's, as the Right Reverend Father in God, *JOHN GAUDEN*, now Lord Bishop of *Exeter*, hath perused and approved of. And nothing hereafter shall be made publick by me under the Name of Bishop *BROWNRIG*, but what shall be first commended to the view of His aforesaid Reverend and Worthy Successour.

If therefore any whosoever shall adventure to put forth any thing, as Bishop *BROWNRIG*'s, besides my self, 'tis to be accounted either fraudulently gotten, or out of imperfect Copies, and may prove a great dishonour to the aforesaid most Learned and Reverend Bishop, and very injurious, not only to me, but to those that shall buy it.

You will easily believe this, if you will compare that single *Sermon* lately thrust forth under Bishop *BROWNRIG*'s Name, concerning *Zerubbabel*, with that, that is presented to the World by

WILLIAM MARTYN.

A
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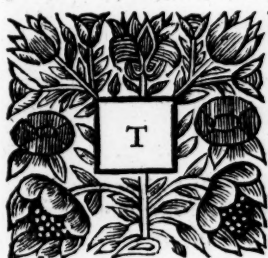
TWO SERMONS

Preached on
Christmas-Day.

The First Sermon.

I Tim. III. 16.

And without controversie, Great is the mystery of Godliness; God was manifest in the flesh.——



THE passage of *Scripture* we are now in, is a serious Exhortation of *St. Paul* to *Timothy*, for the worthy discharge of his Office, and Ministry. It is enforced by a double Argument:

1. *A dignitate Ecclesiæ*, from the nature and dignity of the *Church*; the Government of which was committed to him; he is set over *the House of the living God*; that's no small dignity. If to be a Door-keeper in the Courts of God, be so honourable in *Kings David's* esteem, *Psal. 84.*

how great an honour is it to have the Key of *David* laid on his shoulder, to have the command and government of that glorious Family?

2. *Ab excellentia Doctrinæ*, from the excellency of that Heavenly Doctrine with which he is intrusted. What's the priviledge of an *Evangelist*? What's the honour of *Timothy's* administration? Much every way; but chiefly, That unto him are committed the Oracles of God.

From these two heads, *St. Paul* magnifies the weight and dignity of this sacred Calling. What honour like this, to be the High Steward and Governour of *God's House*, and Family? What more august and magnificent Title, than to be the disposer and dispencer of the sacred mysteries of his blessed Truth? Let all the Encomiums, and titles of honour be laid together, which all the Philosophers in the World have heaped upon their profession, and doctrine, they are all empty, and jejune, and beggarly, in respect of this glorious description of the *Church*, and faith of *Christians*.

The Text represents to us the great dignity of our Christian Faith. 'Tis no subordinate, common, inferiour Truth, that our Faith believes, and professes; no, it soars high, mounts above the Clouds, transcends the largest compass of all created Truth; enters into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, approaches to the Oracle, and seat of highest Wisdom, and is conversant with the secret, and hidden, and Eternal thoughts of God; hath access to the treasures of Heaven, searches and discovers even the deep things of God.

Serm. I.

In it observe these two things ;

1. Here is a glorious Description of it ; *Without controversie, great is the Mystery of Godliness.*

2. Here is a summary Comprehension of it, Θεὸς ἐν σαρκί, *God manifested in the flesh.* That's the main Principle, the chief Oracle of our Belief ; the first stone in the foundation of the Church, the main basis that supports the Pillar of Truth, Christ, God-Incarnate ; that grand Truth which at this time the Church most solemnly professes, and adores, Θεωσαία, *God manifested in the flesh.*

First, See this glorious Description of our Christian Faith ; *Without controversie, great is the Mystery of Godliness.* A magnificent Preface and Introduction ushering in this sacred Truth ; requiring not only the assent, but the obedience, nay, the devotion and adoration of our Faith. When he brings his First-begotten into the World, he proclaims before him, *Let all the Angels of God worship him, Let every knee bow down before him, Let every tongue confess to him.* St. Paul cannot mention Christ, or the Mystery of the Gospel, but he breaks forth into all possible expressions of words and matter, into all terms of wonderment, and admiration. Indeed, all God's works are wonderful, not to be spoken of but with much affection. As David meditating on the works of Creation, *Psal. 139. 17. How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the sum of them!* True ; but the work of Redemption, this Master-piece of God's Power and Wisdom in his Son's Incarnation, the Scripture puts upon it all Titles, and Attributes of Honour and Excellency :

1. 'Tis *Verbum Veritatis*, Col. 1. 5. *the word of Truth.*
2. 'Tis *Verbum Regni*, Matth. 13. 19. *the word of the Kingdom.*
3. 'Tis *the Oracle of God*, 1 Pet. 4. 11.
4. 'Tis *the Counsel of God*, Act. 20. 27.
5. 'Tis *a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. And,
6. Here, as full as all, comprehending all of them, *Without all controversie, The great Mystery of Godliness.*

In it, four steps and ascents of dignity :

1. The nature of it ; 'tis *a Mystery.*
2. The just quantity and proportion ; 'tis *a great mystery.*
3. The divine quality and condition of it ; 'tis *a mystery of Godliness.*
4. The undoubted, and infallible certainty of it ; 'tis *without controversie.*

And out of all these put together, arises a short, but yet full compleat definition of all Divinity ; a compendious Epitome of all Religion. What is that profession which we Christians take upon us ? What's the sum of all those lively Oracles, that we are, or should be conversant in ? Here is a lively representation of it. Our Religion, our Faith, our Divinity, what is it ? 'Tis the unquestionable great Mystery of Godliness. A few words, yet the full Title, and Epitome of the Scripture, the sum and upshot of all sacred Truth. What's the use and end of Scripture ? *To make us wise to salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. To acquaint us with the Mystery of Godliness. 'Tis the grand Text of all Sermons ; 'tis the argument, and theme of all Theological discourses ; 'tis the marrow, and kernel of all discourses ; 'tis the drift and center of all the meditations of Saints, and Angels.

1. For the nature of it ; 'tis *Mysterium*. 'Tis the title of the Gospel, Mark. 4. 11. *Unto you it is given to know the Mystery of the Kingdom of God ; that's the Gospel.* 1 Cor. 2. 7. *We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery ; a mystery which was kept secret since the World began*, Rom. 16. 25.

Now to understand the nature of it ; A mystery is *Sacrum Secretum, occultam habens intelligentiam* ; An holy Secret, the understanding and knowledge of which is close and conceal'd. And then is Θεὸς ἐν σαρκί, the sum of Christianity, a Mystery ; It carries with it these conditions,

1. Is it a Mystery ? Then it is in it self full of secrecy, and obscurity, naturally unknown, vail'd up in great reservedness. It is called an hidden mystery ; *a mystery hid from Ages and Generations*, Col. 1. 26. A Mystery,

1. Hidden in God, Ephes. 3. 9. lock'd up in the Closet of his Breast, in his secret Purpose and Counsel.

2. Hidden

2. Hidden in Christ, *Colos. 2. 3. In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom.*
 3. Hidden in the Scripture, that's vail'd up with many *mysteries*; a Book in it self seal'd up with seven seals; no Man or Angel is able fully to open it, *Revel. 3. 18.*

4. Hidden in those Types, and Shadows, and Ceremonies of the Law.

5. Nay even the Gospel, though that brings this *mystery* to some light, yet it is but imperfectly discovered, still a great part is hidden; there is no clear discovery. We know but in part; Faith sees not clearly; *Adbuc manifestat se nobis sicut vult, non sicut est. Bern. Adbuc Josephus loquitur per Interpretem.* He doth not yet fully disclose himself to us. In Heaven, *adipe frumenti saginantur, & nudo satiantur grano.* We must be content *Sacramenti cortice, carnis fursure*: Preachings and Sacraments, they are but the husk and the bark, the bran and the chaff, not the clean Corn, winnowed and cleansed; Still it is hidden.

2. 'Tis *mysterium*; therefore the knowledge of it is a matter of Revelation, not to be known by the light or benefit of Nature, but it is of supernatural discovery. The eye of Nature cannot see it, nor the ear of Nature hear it, nor did it ever enter into the heart of a natural man; but God hath reveal'd it to us by his Spirit, *1 Cor. 2. 9, 10.* All other knowledge hath some prints and foot-steps in Nature, but this is a meer novelty to Nature. *Animæ creationem, intelligunt & Dæmones; Animæ redemptionem, ignorant & Angeli.* Herein it exceeds the perfection of the Law; that's written in our hearts by Nature; the light of Reason discovers the truth of the Law; but the Gospel is not inbred in us, it must be reveal'd, and discover'd by God himself. *Non potest doceri nisi à donante, nec addisci nisi à suscipiente*: We cannot see the Sun, but by the light of the Sun; nor know Christ, till himself discover himself. St. Paul prays that they may have the Spirit of Revelation.

3. 'Tis in it self a *Mystery*, therefore the discovery of it is a matter of dispensation; an arbitrary, voluntary discovery to whom God pleases, and as much as he pleases. This Christ acknowledgeth, *Matth. 11. 25, 26. Thou hast hid these things from the wise, and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes: Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* This will answer all questions: And that of his to Christ, *Joh. 14. 22. Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not to the World?* For natural knowledge, he enlightens every man that comes into the World, *Joh. 1. 9.* But this knowledge he dispenseth at pleasure, less to the Jews, more to the Christians. To the Prophets, it was the light of a Candle; to the Apostles, the light of the Day-Star: Hereafter we shall see the Sun in his shining beauty.

4. 'Tis a *Mystery*; therefore the Revelation of it, is a special favour. To communicate his secret thoughts, the mysteries of his Will, 'tis a fruit of greatest love. *You are my friends, saith Christ, for I tell you all things.* St. John learnt it in the bosom of Christ; and he was the beloved Disciple; he lay in the bosom, the seat of Affection, and of Secrets too. One dram of this Knowledge is better than the knowledge of all the secrets of Nature.

Which, if it be a *Mystery*, then,

1. Reverenter adeundum; we must not approach to the looking into these Mysteries, but with much fear and reverence. The Heathens exacted all reverence to their false, counterfeit *mysteries*. They commanded all prophane men to stand off, not to come near their Sacred *Mysteries*. Carelessness, and prophaneation, 'tis the greatest opposite to the *mysteries* of Religion. How hath God exacted Holiness, and Reverence, in all that draw near to be partakers of his Sacred *Mysteries*? *Put off thy shoes, it is holy ground.* When God came down on the Mount, they were all to wash and cleanse themselves; 'twas Death to come irreverently. *Nadab and Abihu* were destroyed by fire for an unhallowed approach, *Levit. 10. The Lord will be sanctified in them that come nigh him, Vers. 3.* The men of *Bethshemesh*, for an irreverent approach to the Ark (the Type of our *mysteries*) were slain, even many thousands of them. Of the two, Superstition less

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offends God, than Profanation. 'Twas the great Charge God laid upon the Jews, and for which he threatned to remove his Worship from them to the Gentiles, because they prophaned his Worship, *polluted the Table of the Lord, and made the meat of it contemptible, Mal. 1. 12.* All the appurtenances belonging to this mystery, are to be revered; the Place, the Time, every Utensil. Is it a Mystery? Then,

2. *Caste, & sobriè tractandum*; we must handle this mystery chastly, and soberly. The mysteries of Religion are not slightly, or vainly, or sportingly to be handled; but heedfully, soberly, with all awful attention.

1. The Minister who speaks of them, how holily must he handle them? 1 Pet. 4. 11. *Let him speak as the Oracles of God.* It was the Charge of the Priests in the Old Law, *Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord, Isai. 52. 11.* All those Legal Pollutions that caused an Irregularity in the Priests, made them incapable of ministring; and they are all enforcements of that purity, and sobriety, that are required in the Servitors and Dispensers of these sacred Mysteries. This made Moses refuse; *Send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send, Exod. 4. 13.* and Esay to cry out, *I am a man of unclean lips, Esa. 6. 5.* and St. Paul to cry out, *Who is sufficient for these things, 2 Cor. 2. 16.*

2. It urges soberness in the Partakers, who are admitted to the fellowship of this Mystery. As all Irreverence, so all vain Curiosity is forbidden: We must *οεγειν εις το σωφειν*, in these Mysteries we must be wise to Sobriety, Rom. 12. 3. Gravity and Sobriety, they are the Handmaids of Piety, the Ushers that always attend Religion. The applying of any Matter in Religion to an inferiour use, 'tis to debase it. The holy Ointment was not to be applicable to common use; no Confection to be made like unto it. Is it a Mystery? Then,

3. *Fide percipiendum*; Religion, and our Christian Doctrine, it is a Mystery; therefore to be apprehended by Faith, not to be fathomed by Reason. Reason will judge that to be a Foolery, which Faith reverences and adores as a Mystery. 'Tis called *The mystery of Faith, 1 Tim. 3. 9.* not the mystery of Reason, or Understanding. And they who are initiated into these Mysteries, they are called Believers, not Men of Reason and Understanding. We are called *Credentes*, not *Rationales*, saith St. Aug. 'Tis not *Intelligendi vivacitas*, but *Credendi simplicitas*, that must converse in these Mysteries. Reason laughs at that in Sarah, which Faith in Abraham embraces, and rejoices in. Faith looks for a Revelation, that God saith it is so; searches not after Demonstration, or Reason, why it should be so. *Sufficit pro universis rationibus, auctor Deus.* The Mysteries of Religion check and silence Reason, as the Angel did Zacharias, for asking, *Whereby shall I know this?* He would have Reason: What saith the Angel? *Luke 1. 20. Behold, thou shalt be dumb*: he stops his mouth. Reason, deduced from the Principles of Faith, and subordinate to the Doctrine of Faith, 'tis lawful; but when it opposes Faith, then it is unlawful. Hagar, when she obeys Sarah, may be entertain'd as a Servant; but if she wax malepert against Sarah, *Cast out the Bondwoman*: Abandon Reason, if it contradicts Faith.

It is one Excellency of Faith, 'tis *quietativa Intellectus*, it quiets and satisfies all Enquiries, with this Answer, *It is a mystery.* Reason, that questions, How can Three Persons be One Godhead? Faith quiets Reason; My Soul, keep thou silence unto God; believe and adore it; it is a Mystery. Reason questions, How can God be made Man? the Divinity and Humanity join'd in One Person? Faith hears an Oracle of Scripture, I must not enquire, it is a Mystery. Reason murmurs, How can a man be born again, and regenerate, and die anew, and live anew? How can Water wash away Sin? Faith answers, The Work is Spiritual, beyond Reason; it is a Mystery. Reason, that cavils, How can Christ give us his Flesh to eat, and his Blood to drink? How can a piece of Bread, and a taste of Wine, convey Grace, seal up Salvation? How can our Souls be nourished? how united to Christ sitting in Heaven? Faith answers all, 'Tis a Mystery. *Magis sentio, quam intelligo: Tota ratio operis, est potentia operantis.*

No, in these supernatural Truths, *Sapientia hominis*, it is *Officina erroris*; exclude

clude Reasoning, make use of Believing. *Habet palatum fides, cui sapit mel Dei.* *Serm. I*
Aug. 'Tis the taste of Faith that can relish this hidden Manna. Faith, faith
Parisenfis,

1. It is *Religio Intellectus*; the Religion of our Intellectual Part.
2. It is *Adoratio Intellectus*; the Adoration of the Understanding: *Credendo incurvamus Intellectum ad adorandum Deum.*
3. It is *Fortitudo Intellectus*; 'tis the Strength of the Understanding. *Sicut molestias perferre, 'tis Fortitudo Voluntatis; sic improabilia credere, 'tis Fortitudo Intellectus.*

We have seen the Nature of it; 'tis a *Mystery*:

Now follows,

II. The Quantity and just Proportion of this *Mystery*; it is no petty and inferior *Truth*, but a *Mystery* of the first Magnitude, A great *Mystery*. The Scripture advances it with all superlative terms, magnifies the greatness of it. *Phil.* 3. 8. St. Paul calls it an *Excellent Knowledge*; *I count all things but loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ.* *Rom.* 11. 33. it is called a *Rich Knowledge*. Solomon saith, it furnishes a man with all precious and pleasant Riches, *Prov.* 24. 4. It enriches him that hath it. It furnishes and enriches the noblest part of Man, his Soul; the highest Faculty of That, his Spirit and Understanding. Our Saviour accounts the seeking of this Knowledge, the seeking of precious Pearls; *Mat.* 13. 45. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Merchant-man, seeking goodly Pearls.* This, of all other, is a *Pearl of great price*. They who are conversant in this *Mystery*, they deal with the choicest Commodities, with the richest Pearls. The finding of this Knowledge, is the finding of an hidden Treasure, *ver.* 44. It makes him for ever, that is so happy as to meet with it. All other Knowledge is but Poverty, to this *Treasure*; all other Jewels but Pebbles, to this *Pearl*.

See how the Scripture extends and enlarges the greatness of this *Mystery*. St. Paul ascribes to it all the Dimensions of Magnitude, *Ephes.* 3. 18. *That ye may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of this Mystery.* And Job thus magnifies the exceeding and incomprehensible largeness of this Knowledge, *Chap.* 11. 8, 9. *It is as high as heaven, —deeper than Hell, —longer than the Earth, —broader than the Sea.* It exceeds the scantling of all Created Perfections. The Greatness of all other Creatures may be fathomed; the height of Heaven, the depth of Hell, the length of the Earth, the breadth of the Sea, all limited, and bounded, and the Understanding of Man may reach them: As David speaks, *I see an end of all other Perfections, but thy Word is exceeding large.*

1. This *Mystery* of God Incarnate, 'tis a great *Mystery*, because 'tis *multiplex Mysterium*, a comprehensive *Truth*, including in it manifold *Mysteries*. 'Tis a *Mystery* pregnant; to the making up of which, many deep *Mysteries* concur. God manifested in the *Flesh*.

1. Here is the *Mystery* of Christ's two Natures; his Divinity, and his Humanity: A glorious *Mystery*! Christ, true and perfect God, and true and perfect Man too; the Glory of the Deity, and the Infirmary of his Manhood, both concurring in him.

2. Here is the *Mystery* of the Union, and conjoining both these in one. A strange Conjunction! The Circumference of his Infinite Deity, joined to the lowest Center of Humanity; Eternity made subject to Time; Infinity comprehended in a poor Finite Creature; Omnipotency joined with Infirmary: This is so great a *Mystery*, that it made the Jews to imagine a double *Messiah*: One, a weak, frail, mortal Man, liable to Sufferings; the other, an Eternal, Omnipotent, Immortal God. They could not reconcile the several Predictions of his glorious Divinity, and his infirm Humanity, as this *Mystery* teaches us.

3. Here is the *Mystery* of his Person; that both these Natures should be so strangely and admirably united into one Person; that God and Man should be personally one *Christ*;

1. Not

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1. Not by a Concord of Wills;
2. Or by a Transfusion of Properties;
3. Or by Assistance of Grace: But,
4. By an inward Union and Conjunction in Person: It is a *Mystery* that Divines have laboured to express by any possible Similitudes, and could not do it.

2. 'Tis *Magnum Mysterium*. This of *Christ's* Incarnation, 'tis the grand *Mystery*, because all other *Mysteries* are subordinate and serviceable to this: all sacred Truths point at this *Truth*; all, like Lines, meet in this Center. 'Tis the end and drift of all the sacred Prophecies. *To him give all the Prophets witness, Acts 10. 43.* It was the sum and scope of all their Predictions, *All the Prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have foretold his Coming, Acts 3. 24.* Of this Salvation, all the Prophets have enquired, and searched diligently. He is *Abraham's* promised Seed; *Moses* his great Prophet; *Samuel's* anointed King; *Jacob's* Shilo; *Esay's* Immanuel; *Jeremy's* Man compassed by a Woman; *Ezekiel's* Shepherd; *Daniel's* Holy One; *Zachary's* Branch; *Solomon's* Lilly; *David's* Lord; *Malachy's* Angel: All that prophesied, looked at him. He is the end, and body, and substance of all their Rites and Ceremonies, He was *Abel's* Sacrifice; *Abraham's* First-fruits; *Isaac's* Ram; *Jacob's* Ladder; *Moses* his Passover; *Aaron's* Rod; the *Israelites* Rock; the Patriarchs *Manna*; *David's* Tabernacle; *Solomon's* Temple; all types and representations of his Incarnation. All their Kings were Figures of this great King; all their Deliverers and Judges, Types of this great Saviour; all their Priests were Ushers to bring in this *High-Priest of our Profession*. All the *Mysteries* in Scripture were serviceable to this *Mystery*.

3. 'Tis *Magnum Mysterium*; 'tis a great *Mystery*, far exceeding all *Mysteries* in the World. All secrets of Nature are but Elements and Rudiments to this Oracle. The learnedst men that can search into all Natural Knowledge, stand gazing at this, and cry out, How can this thing be? All *Mysteries* of States they are but meer follies and dotages to this Wisdom. The vanquishing of Satan, What Victory like this? The birth of God, What Princes Nativity so honourable? The Laws of the Church, the Heavenly Oracles, What Laws so righteous? The Priviledges of the Gospel, What Prerogatives, Charters, Liberties, so ample? Other Kings (saith *St. Chrysostom*) they govern the Bodies, this King Reigns in the Souls of Men. Other Kings fight with bodily Weapons, this King with spiritual. Other Kings fight against Barbarians, *Christ* against Devils. All subtilties of Art, but meer daubings and botcheries to this great *Mystery*. That Art can tame Lions, lead about Tigers, How do we wonder at this? This *Mystery* here can change and alter brutish, savage, barbarous men, reduce them to all sobriety, and moderation. *Christ's* Incarnation shall make the Wolf dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard lie down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the Fatling together, and a little Child shall lead them, &c. *Esay 11. 6.* That Art is curious that can drive away Diseases, lengthen and strengthen life: How far exceeding is this *Mystery*, that can cure Soul-sickness? not only cure sickness, but recover from death, regenerate and renew a man old, and withered, nay, dead, and give life to him? Other Arts can alter Nature, but this doth change it. That may polish Brass, but not turn it into a purer Metal. *Evangelium ferreum vas, reddidit aureum.*

4. 'Tis *Magnum Mysterium*, a great *Mystery*; because 'tis a *Mystery* even to all men of the largest capacity, the most clear understanding. In other truths, that may be a *mystery* to one man, which is but an easie, ordinary truth to the mind of another. As in Nature, some things seem very mysterious and obscure to a vulgar understanding, which a learned judicious man can presently comprehend. As the Eclipse of the Sun, an unlearned man wonders at it as a great secret of Nature, but a Scholar counts the knowledge of it easie, and obvious. So in Works of Art, *Aliter judicat peritus Artifex, aliter imperitus inspector.* An unskilful man will account that a curious piece of work, which an expert Artificer will judge but ordinary. But this Oracle, and *mystery* with which we have to do, it poseth the

the greatest wits, far exceeds the largest understanding. Solomon, who knew the secrets of nature, his large head was too narrow for it. He confesses, I have not the understanding of a man; I have not learned this Wisdom. It is hid even from the wise and prudent, Matt. 11. Where is the Wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the dispenser of the World? 1 Cor. 1. 20. All their wisdom falls short of this. It fares with the greatest Understanding, as it doth with the bodily eye: The sharpest Eye-sight that can behold all Earthly things clearly, yet if it look up to the body of the Sun, it dazles, and trembles, and cannot behold it. The least appearance of this mystery, it overwhelmed and surcharged the most enlightened understanding. When Christ appeared to Abraham (which was but *prælude* Incarnationis) he falls on his face, and trembles. When Moses had but a glimpse of this glory, I tremble exceedingly, saith he. When Elijah saw but the back-parts of Christ, he hid his face, he durst not look on. When Daniel approaches near it, it lays him for dead: It casts Paul into a rapture; Peter into a trance; John lay as a dead man. *Excellens objectum, destruit sensum. This knowledge, it is too high, I cannot attain to it.* All humane understandings tremble, adore, are astonished at it.

5. 'Tis *Magnum Mysterium*, a great Mystery, not only to humane, but even to the highest Angelical understanding: 'tis a great deep mystery even unto the Angels. Those Stars of the Morning (as Job calls them) are overwhelmed with the Splendor of this Sun. 'Tis a Mystery to them.

This great Work, it was conceal'd from them; it lay hid in the Womb of Eternity, and they still wonder and admire at the greatness of it. See this in two places; one is, Ephes. 3. 10. *Unto Principalities and Powers in Heavenly places, is made known, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God.* Not only some inferior Angels (as Lombard conceits) were ignorant of it, but the most illuminated Angels; it was a Mystery to them; and by the Church they learn it (as some conceive) that they see and behold in the Church, and wonder at the secrets of the Gospel, which are there unfolded. At the preaching of the Gospel, the Angels flock to see the fulfilling of those mysteries represented in the Tabernacle, all the Curtains being adorned with Cherubs. Another place is, 1 Pet. 1. 12. *Which things the Angels desire to look into.* They do *ἐκκρίνω*, stoop down, and pry, and desire to look into these glorious Mysteries. This was prefigured in the two Cherubs on the Mercy-Seat, looking back upon the Ark and Mercy-Seat; and they still desire it. They cannot fully comprehend, and 'tis a ravishing sight to them. Strange! How dull are we? Preach we of Christ made Man, 'tis Milk for Babes; Rudiments for Children; whereas Angels count it hidden Manna.

That's the second, it is *Magnum Mysterium*, a great mystery.

Now follows,

III. The Quality and Condition of this mystery; 'tis a mystery of Godliness. A short, but yet full comprehension of Christian Religion. 'Tis the Art and Mystery of Godliness. And this truth branches it self into two particulars:

1. Piety and Godliness; it is a Mystery.
2. The Piety of Religion, and the mystery of Religion must be joined together. We must possess our selves not only with the mystery of Religion, but also with the Piety.

1. Piety, it is a mystery; and therefore,

1. The Art of Godliness, the skill to live holily, it is an high, hidden, supernatural thing; a skill far beyond the reach and possibility of nature. 'Tis no endowment of Nature; it is hidden and conceal'd to natural knowledge. By nature, we are utterly void of this gracious endowment. Pharaoh's Speech is the voice of Nature, Exod. 5. 2. *Who is the Lord, that I should obey him? I know not the Lord.* Thus S. Paul describes our natural condition; *We are alienated from the life of God*, Eph. 4. 18. *Without Christ, being Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World*, Ephes. 2. 12. This David describes, Psal. 14. 2, 3, 4. *The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the Children of men, to see if there were any that did understand,*

Serm. 1. understand, and seek God; They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy—and call not upon the Lord. We naturally know, There is a God; there is no man born an Atheist; we have some sense of a Deity; but we are all born profane, and irreligious, without any sense of piety; utterly ignorant how to worship and serve him in true holiness. That knowledge of God, which by nature we have, it always breaks out into one of these two Extremes; either,

1. Into prophanation, and so we never worship him; or,

2. Into superstition, and so we misplace his worship in things abominable to him. When we know God, we worship him not as God, *Rom. 1.* His worship depends upon his own Will and Revelation. *We know not with what we must serve the Lord, till we come thither, Ex. 10. 26. 2 Kings 17. 26.* They know not the manner of the God of this land. Holiness, it is no invention of nature, but a revelation of grace. Nature may lead us to civility, train us up to morality; but spiritual piety, and godliness, is beyond the reach of nature: This wisdom is from above, *Jam. 3. 17.* Hast thou nothing but what thou broughtest with thee into the World? Thou art utterly destitute of the life of godliness. Piety it is a mystery, it is a Secret to nature.

It gives us a reason why godliness is so scarce, so few are acquainted with it. That, that is natural, is usual and common; but this is supernatural, beyond the reach of nature. It is more admirable that any are holy, than that all are not. Most men live short of the light of nature; wonder not that so few are advanced beyond nature to the state of grace.

Piety is a mystery; therefore,

2. To natural men, it is, and seems to be, a reasonless, uncouth, unlikely thing, a meer Paradox. Tell a vulgar, unlearned man, of the mysteries of any Art, or Science, he thinks you speak non-sense; he can see nothing in them, they seem unreasonable. As many mysteries as you acquaint him with, so many absurdities; he laughs at them. 'Tis so with all the mysteries of godliness. Propound them to a carnal man, he will laugh at them; persuade him to them, he rejects them; enforce them upon him, he repels them. 'Tis that which S. Paul observes, *Our Gospel is hid to them that perish, 2. Cor. 4. 3.* A natural man judges these spiritual truths stark foolishness, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* Therefore the mysteries of the Gospel are called the foolishness of God, *1 Cor. 1. 25.* God hath wrapt them all up in the vail of such mystical obscurity, that, at first sight, they appear odd, and unlikely to a carnal man. As the Ark, though it were within all of pure Gold, yet the coverings were plain, and coarse; of hair, and Goats-skins, no outward beauty to be seen. Thus Christ, the great mystery, is God vail'd up in weak flesh; *How can this man save us?* The meanness of his outside scandalized the Jews; *Is not this the Carpenter?* — *They were offended at him, Mark 6. 3.* And Christ knew it, how easily men would stumble at the unlikeliness of this mystery, that he pronounceth him blessed *that shall not be offended in him, Matt. 11. 6.* *Esa. 53.* This is the reason the Prophet gives, why so few believe in Christ, ver. 1. *Who hath believed our report? He is as a root, ver. 2. in a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*

Yea, the Doctrine of Godliness, how absurd seems it to natural reason? Regeneration, to be born again, become a new man, Nicodemus cannot conceive it, *John 3.* To be nourish'd to life by Christ's flesh; *How can this man give us his flesh?* 'Tis an hard saying, *Job. 6.* Self-denial, and mortification, to be Crucified to the World, to cross our own wills, and wrastle with our selves, and to beat down our own bodies; a mystery of piety, a folly to nature. To hate Father, Mother, Life it self for Religion-sake, how unreasonable? Not to live by sense, or reason, but by Faith, Nature abhors it. To love our Enemies, to rejoyce in afflictions, to know how to be in want, poverty, *μενικναι*, saith S. Paul, *Phil. 4. 12.* 'Tis more blessed to give than to receive; to part with all in hope of gain at the resurrection, in another World; and, above all, to look for Salvation in a Crucified Saviour; *hec sunt stulta Dei, sed decus fidei*; these are the mysteries of our piety, the follies and paradoxes of Natural Reason. No, saith the Psalmist, *The Kings Daughter is all glorious within, Psal. 45.* All the glory of Piety, and

and the Church, 'tis spiritual and Heavenly. Worldly wisdom, that's in Worldly Beauty : As the Church of the wicked one is glorious with Earthly beauty, a Crown of gold, a purple Robe, beset with Precious Stones, all Earthly Ornaments ; so the Spouse of Christ, she is Beautiful, but all Heavenly ; Cloath'd with the Sun, Crown'd with the Stars, Treading on the Moon ; all Heavenly and Mystical.

Piety, it is a *Mystery*, high, and hidden ; therefore,

3. The attaining of this Heavenly Skill, and Art of Holiness, is a matter of much difficulty ; it requires much search and study, much learning and diligence, much exercise and experience to attain unto it. Those Arts that have in them many abstruse *mysteries*, are long a learning. Oh ! the Art of Godliness, the Trade of Piety, the Skill of living holily, 'tis no small matter, but very *mysterious*. The Philosopher could say of his Art, *Ars longa, Vita brevis*, a mans life was too short to attain to the perfection of it. How much more is this high Art of Religion, *the mystery of godliness* ? It makes David, for all his learning, to cry out still, *Teach me, Instruct me, Make me to understand the way of godliness*. S. Paul, that great Proficient, yet professes he fell short, *Phil. 3. 11, 12, 13. Brethren, I count not my self to have apprehended, I have not already attained, I am not already perfect, but I follow after, and press forward, if by any means I might attain* ; words of striving and contention.

How hard a thing is it to attain even to the knowledge of *godliness* ? Then how difficult must it be to mortifie thy lusts, to subdue thine appetite ? 'Tis call'd a *Crucifying*. Consider it, you, who think seven years little enough to learn any Trade of life ; but any little time, any poor pains, sufficient to learn that which the Saints were practising all their days. Try thy strength but with one Act, but with one Duty of Godliness ; and then tell me, if slubbering over a few Prayers, or coming to Church, and yawning out an *Amen*, half asleep, half awake, be likely to make thee a skilful man in this Trade of Piety.

That's the first ; *Religion is the mystery of godliness*.

2. The second Truth is, The *Mystery*, and the *Piety* of Religion must go both together. We must take both to us ; not only content our selves with the *mystery* of Christianity, but be sure we acquaint our selves with the *Piety*. True Religion joyns both together. Thus St. Paul describes Christian Religion, *'Tis a Doctrine according to godliness, 1 Tim. 6. 3. And Tit. 1. 1. it is called, the Knowledge of the Truth according unto godliness* : We may as well separate light from heat in the fire, as the *mystery* and knowledge of it from the *Piety*.

Indeed, first we must get the *mystery*, then labour for the *Piety* of it. First, God created light ; so it is in man's Soul. A man is sooner enlightened than sanctified : The Sun enlightens in an instant, but it begets heat in the Air by length of time ; but they must never be a-funder. Blind Devotion, would have the *Piety* without the *Mystery*. Oh ! Zealous it would be, but not with knowledge. Oh ! A good heart to God-wards ; no matter for knowledge. And prophane Curiosity, that would have the *Mystery* without the *Piety* ; understand all secrets and mysteries, comprehend all Truths ; but for the holiness of Christianity, they have no list to it. True Christianity joins both together. True Religion is not like the Tree of Knowledge, only *pleasant to the Eye, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise, Gen. 3. 6*. But it must be to us as the Tree of Life, for Devotion, and Practice. Religion is not placed in the upper Region of the Brain ; but in the Heart, the Seat of Affection, the Fountain of Action. 'Tis a sanctifying Truth ; *Holy Father, sanctifie them through thy Truth, not enlighten them only, John 17. 17.*

There is not any Truth so mystical, and contemplative, but must be drawn in to practice. There is no *mystery* in Scripture, but hath its *Piety*. As there is not any Creature, but it is for some use ; it is not only beautiful, but useful ; *Nontan-tum visu delectat, sed usuprodest* ; so there's no Truth in Religion, but we may, and must extract from it *Piety*. Some Truths, at first sight, seem but dry as to this ; but as the Liquorish stick, at first, looks like any weed, but chew it, and you suck sweetness ; so, those *mysteries* that seem to be most remote from practice, have

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a juice and sap of Piety to be suck'd out of them. *If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them, Joh. 13. 17. This man shall be blessed in his deed, Jam. 1. 25.*

See how Christ checks Curiosity, and turns all to Practice; Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate, Luk. 13. 23, 24.*

1. Piety, 'tis the end of Christianity. 'Tis *mysterium practicum*. Not a Science in contemplation, but an Art of doing; not to make us the wiser, but the holier.

2. Piety, 'tis the best keeper of this mystery. The knowledge of Religion, 'tis a precious Jewel; see the Cabinet S. Paul tells us of, wherein it must be kept; *Holding the mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience, 1 Tim. 3. 9.* Wouldst thou not err concerning the Faith? Take heed of making Shipwreck of a good Conscience. Knowledge in this Vessel, is like the Manna in the Golden-Pot; it is kept sweet. In a prophane heart, it is like Manna in other Vessels, that stank and putrified. God takes away natural knowledge, if we abuse it, and live not accordingly. When they knew God, and glorified him not as God, God gave them over to error, and never would call them to the knowledge of the Gospel, *Rom. 1. 21, &c.* As we try Vessels first with water; if they will hold, and keep it sweet, then we pour Wine into them. They who corrupt natural knowledge, God will not trust them with this mystery.

Take heed thou divide not the Piety from the Mystery. In all Truths, labour to be better. In any mystery, make S. Peter's Collection; *If these things are so, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy Conversation and Godliness?*

We have seen the quality and condition of this Mystery, It is a Mystery of Godliness. Now follows,

IV. The infallible, undoubted certainty of this Mystery; It is beyond, without all controversy.

There is a double Certainty;

1. A certainty in the thing it self. 'Tis a most grounded Truth. Heaven and Earth may sooner fail, than the least particle of this Truth. It hath the Power, and the Truth, and the Faithfulness of God; nay, his Oath to establish it.

2. A certainty of perswasion; at this the Text aims. See with what confidence and assurance S. Paul seals up this great Truth; *'Tis without controversy.* Observe; True Faith embraceth these Heavenly Truths with all assurance, and strength of adhesion, and fulness of perswasion. 'Tis the nature and office of true Faith, in matters of God, to breed all possible assurance. 'Tis a Seal. He who receives God's testimony of his Son, *hath set to his Seal, that God is true, Joh. 3. 33.* Philip shews the assurance of Faith, which he requires of the Eunuch; *Acts 8. 37.* *If thou believest with all thine heart, that Jesus is the Son of God.* Especially in this Truth, Jesus, God-Incarnate, Faith breaks through all controversies, and unquestionably must believe.

1. This Truth is clearly revealed in Scripture. And Divine Revelation is the stay and establishment of Faith. Truths that are more obscurely delivered, are liable to question, and controversy; but this Truth, that, Jesus is the Messiah, and the Author of Salvation, it is with all evidence propounded to us. When God speaks clearly, Faith believes firmly. *Credendum est Deo, vel semel loquenti.*

2. This Truth, 'tis an immediate, and first principle of Religion; the grand Maxim, and Oracle of Divinity. Now in all Professions, Principles are unquestionable, admit no gain-saying. *He that comes to God, must believe—*

3. 'Tis a fundamental Truth; the first stone that is laid in the building of the Church; the main Rock upon which the whole Building rests. See, when Christ builds his Church, he chuses this Confession, *Thou art the Son of the living God*; he lays that in the foundation. Now in all buildings, the foundation must be sure and immoveable. Here, *Qui dubitat in fide, est infidelis.* Agrippa's almost, 'tis too weak; no, here, *What we have heard, and seen, and felt—*

4. Errours in this, are most dangerous. As errours in the Conception are hardly corrected, so errors in this first Conception of Faith. Oh! these prime Truths

Truths must be firmly, and strongly embraced. Other consequential and secondary Truths of less evidence and necessity, may admit of discussion. In some Truths we may differ, *Salva compage fidei*; but in this, every error is deadly. In some Truths, S. Paul's moderation is sweet, *If any man think otherwise, God will reveal it to him; account him as a Brother*: But in this, he that errs, S. Paul's threatening is seasonable, *You are fallen from grace, you are cut off from Christ, you must dye in your sins.*

There is a necessary Truth; *Maria, virgo in partu.*

There is a decent Truth; *Maria, virgo post partum.*

Faith puts these Truths without question. *Ὁμολογούμενος.*

1. This is the defiance Faith gives to all the objections and cavils of Nature; How can God become a Man? The Creator, a Creature? A Virgin conceive? *Get thee behind me, Satan; 'tis without all controversy.*
2. By this, it answers and represses the contradictions of infidelity; a man's heart is hardly drawn to assent and give credit to these *mysteries*: No, Faith tramples all contradictions under foot; *'tis without all controversy.*
3. By this, it overcomes the weaknesses and infirmities of Faith. Faith at first, hath many doubts and fears; But why do thoughts rise in my heart? I know he is a faithful and true witness; no word is impossible to him. 'Tis the victory and triumph that Faith gets over all doubtings, it believes steadfastly, *without all controversy.*



O N Christmas-Day.

The Second Sermon.

Galat. IV. 4, 5.

When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.



High words set out unto us the great and gracious work of our *Redemption*: A work undertaken and wrought by the Incarnation of our blessed Saviour. The remembrance of which, the Church of God doth this day joyfully Celebrate. An high Festival it is, and to be honoured by us: whether we respect *Christ*, and, in him, the mystery of the day; or respect our selves, and, in us, the mercy, and benefit, which, as on this day, was vouchsafed to us.

1. Look upon *Christ*, and the mystery of his Incarnation; so 'tis a Birth-day Feast, the Feast of his Nativity. And the Feast of the Birth-day, especially of some extraordinary, and eminent person (and such an one, above all was the Birth of this day; *Pharaoh's* Birth-day, and *Herod's*, were nothing to it) is kept and celebrated with all joyful solemnity. That is the mystery of the Text, *Christ* made, and born of a Woman; so it is a day of joyfulness.

2. Look upon our selves, and the mercy, and benefit of this day, that redounded to us; and so it is a Feast of deliverance out of Captivity. This day

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Christ came to redeem us that lay under the Law, cast and condemned men: And a day of enlargement out of Captivity, that is a Feast of Jubile: Such was this day. No Captivity like that of ours; neither the Egyptian, when they were born slaves; nor that of Babylon, when carried away to be slaves; both of them fall short of this, the bondage of our birth, and the slavery of our life; none like to it, and so no redemption to be compared to it. 'Tis a day much to be remembered in our Generations.

1. It is the day of *Christ's* Nativity, keep it with joyfulness.
2. It is a day of our enlargement out of Captivity, keep it with thankfulness.

The Apostle then sets out unto us, the happy condition that hath betided the Church of God by the coming of *Christ* in his Incarnation. And he expresses it two ways;

1. By a comparative opposition to the state of the Church before *Christ's* coming.
2. By a positive, or rather superlative, illustration of the happy condition of the Church, by his coming among us.

1. The Church of the Jews before *Christ*, the low condition of that is set out by three steps of depression and inferiority, in respect of our state of advancement that *Christ's* Birth brings to us.

1. *Respectu Aetatis*, for its Age; it was a Child, or an Infant, *vers. 1.* A Child in knowledge, in growth of grace, in affections; a Child, weak, imperfect, unskilful.

2. *Respectu conditionis*, for the usage and condition in which it was; it was *Servilis*; it differ'd nothing from a Servant, under a yoke of servitude, kept in more servile fear and subjection than Christians. Their Spirit was the Spirit of fear and bondage; our Spirit is the Spirit of love and liberty.

3. *Respectu Educationis*, for its breeding and education; it was at the command, and under the institution of a curst Schoolmaster, the Law: and but meanly instructed; acquainted only with the first Elements and Rudiments of our Religion; the high Mysteries of our Faith, not manifested to them.

And this threefold depression of the Jewish Church, should make us look three steps lower, into the sad and forlorn estate of us Gentiles and Heathen, (for such was our original.)

1. Were they Babes and Children? We far worse; dead in our sins; not begot again to God by any Spiritual Regeneration, not so much as in the Womb of Conception, out of the Church, Uncircumcised Infidels.

2. Were they in the condition of Servants? We not so much as Servants; Strangers, Rebels, Cast-aways, Enemies, in a forlorn condition.

3. Were they kept under Inferiour Tutors and Governours? We far worse; untaught, ignorant, foolish, like the Wild Ass, without understanding, without God in the World.

2. The Estate of the Christian Church is illustred by a superlative eminency and advancement it hath gained by *Christ's* Incarnation. And this benefit we gain by him, is expressed in three remarkable particulars:

1. The first thing remarkable in this great benefit is the Time when it was performed; *When the fulness of time was come.*

2. The second thing remarkable, is, the very Performance and Accomplishment of it; and that is considerable,

1. In the Causes of this Benefit, which are three:

1. The Author of it, *God.*

2. The Actor of it, *His Son.*

3. The Assurer of it, *vers. 6.* that is, the *Holy Ghost*. All three persons of the glorious Trinity, as they concurr'd in our Creation, so they join and meet in the accomplishment of our Redemption.

2. In the manner of working and performing this Benefit; that is remarkable: and it is twofold,

1. *Designando*; By designing and appointing the Son to do it; *Emisit, God sent him.*

2. *Aptando*;

2. *Aptando*; By fitting, and furnishing, and accommodating him for the performance of it. And there is a double fitness God put upon him; Serm. II.
1. Is *Aptitudo naturæ*; A fitness of Nature; he made him Man, cloath'd him with our Flesh, put him into that Nature, that was fit to work it.
 2. Is *Aptitudo status*; A fitness of state and condition, such as was requisite in him who should work it; *Made him under the Law*, put upon him that Bond and Obligation for us. That's the second thing remarkable, the very performance of it.
 3. The third thing remarkable, is the end and fruit of it; the good that we gain by it: and that is twofold;
 1. Is *Liberatio à malo*; A freedom from misery; that is the benefit of Redemption; *That he might redeem. us.*
 2. Is *Exaltatio ad bonum*, The advancing of us to happiness by the benefit of Adoption; *That we might receive the Adoption of Sons.*

First, That which is considerable, is, The time of our Saviour's Incarnation; it was in the fulness of time. Now this fulness of time, is two ways considerable;

1. There is *Naturalis plenitudo temporis*; A kind of natural fulness of time; when time comes to the full growth; when the World was at his ripe and full Age, at the Meridian, and Noon-tide of the World; neither in the Nonage and Minority, nor yet in the old Age and decay of the World; That's the natural fulness of time.

2. There is *Constitutata plenitudo temporis*; The set, appointed time, which God had design'd for this great Work: when that appointed time came to the full, then *Christ* was Incarnate, sent to redeem.

I: Consider it as the natural fulness of time. 'Tis with the Age of the World, as it is with the Age of Man; there is a time of encreasing, till he comes to his full growth; and then there is a time of decaying, and wearing away. 'Tis so in the course of time; The middle 'twixt both, 'tis the fulness of time: and in that *Christ* came. Not in the beginning of time, nor yet in the last closure, and period, and conclusion of time.

1. *Christ* came not in the beginning, and Morning of the World, presently after the fall of *Adam*; but stay'd, deferr'd his coming for a season, for divers Reasons:

1. *Differendo medicinum, aggravavit morbum.* When the World had sinned, God did not presently dispatch our Saviour, that the fall and Disease of sin might be more observable, and so the cure prove more gloriously remarkable. Were we presently cured, so soon as we complain'd, we should less esteem the danger of our Disease. The long smart, and tediousness of our misery, makes us to consider what it is to sin. *Christ* would not go at the first Call to Cure *Lazarus*, but stay'd three days, that he might be sick, and die, and be buried, and putrified; that the Case of *Lazarus* might seem more desperate: So, God let the World lie and continue in that ruine, that sin might appear out of measure sinful.

In the course of Nature, a wound is sooner given, than it can be cured again: And in the dispensation of grace, God takes longer time for punishing, and pardoning, than we take for sinning: *Numb. 14. 34.* *After the number of the days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities; even forty years, that ye may know my breach of promise.* The sin of the Spies and People was but forty days continuance, but they felt the smart of that sin full forty years. This course God took with the World, *Rom. 11. 33.* *God hath shut up all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all:* First shut them up and Imprison'd them; before he pardon'd and enlarg'd them. *Miriam*, for a word spoken amiss, must be shut out of the Camp seven days. *Had her Father but spit in her Face, should she not be ashamed seven days?* The sense of God's displeasure was to abide upon us. *St. Paul* sets out unto us this Divine œconomy, *Gal. 3. 19.* After God had promised *Christ*, many hundred years were spent, ere he performed his Promise. The Law came

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came betwixt; and it was added *because of Transgression, till the Seed should come.* The World was to look for a Saviour; but in the mean time, the Law was set over them to convince them of sin, to make them know it is an evil and a bitter thing to fall away from God; and then comes the Saviour.

2. *Christ* came not presently in the beginning of Time, that so the perfection of the Church might grow by degrees, till it came to the full Age and Measure of *Christ*. 'Tis the Apostles Similitude, *ver. 1.* The Church was first as a Child in the Minority; much time to pass over it, till it come to perfection. It is compared,

1. To a Building; that is, a leisurely, slow work. An House, or a City, it is not built in a day. First the Foundation, then the Walls, then, after that, lay on the Roof. 'Tis compared,

2. To Husbandry, and sowing of Seed. 'Tis not *heri sementis, & hodie messis*, to day Seed-time, and to morrow Harvest, but first the Blade, then the Ear; after that, the full Corn in the Ear; then comes Harvest, *Mark 4.* It was sown in Promises, sprung up in Prophecies, bloom'd in Types and Figures; then came the full Ear and Harvest in *Christ's* Incarnation. The joy of that time is the joy of Harvest, *Esay 9. 3.* The improvement of the Church, it is compared,

3. To the growth of a Man, *Eph. 4.* Now of all Creatures, the growth of a Man is most leisurely; he comes slowest on to perfection. When you put a Child to School, you place him not in the highest Form, enter him not into the deepest Mysteries of Learning at first, but begin him at lower: So God first placed the Church, *sub lege Naturæ*, train'd them up in Rudiments reveal'd in a simpler manner; then brings in the *Pædagogic* of *Moses*, sets him to nurture and tutor them in Types and Figures, then brings in *Christ*, the great Prophet and Doctor of the Church.

3. *Christ* came not presently in the beginning of Time, but stay'd and deferr'd his coming, the more to quicken and awaken the expectation of him; to put an edge upon the appetite of the Saints, and to make them long for him. So great a Blessing deserves longing and expectation; and delay, naturally sharpens desire. Thus *Christ* delay'd, and denied the Canaanitish Woman; not to repel her, but to provoke her to more importunity. After the strong strivings of her Faith and Prayer, then, *O Woman, be it unto thee as thou desirest. Open thy Mouth wide, and I will fill it, Psal. 81. 10.* Delay enlargeth, and stretcheth out the desire; and the larger our desires of *Christ* are; the fuller shall we enjoy him.

This made the Church, before *Christ*, long and expect, and be earnest, for his Coming. *Abraham*, he longed to see this day, *Joh. 8.* *Jacob* on his Death-bed, *O Lord, I wait for thy Salvation.* It made the Prophets enquire diligently, and search into the Promises. It is the honourable Stile and Title of the Saints in the Old Testament, they were waiters for the consolation of *Israel*. The Church, like *Sifera's* Mother, look'd out at the Window, *Why stay the Wheels of his Chariot? O that thou would'st break the Heavens, and come down!* The Fathers expound it of the longings of the Patriarchs for the Coming of *Christ*. *Many Kings and Prophets desired to see this day, Luk. 10.* That is the Reason, saith *Gregory*, why the Saints complain'd, Their days were shortned, because they could not live to see *Christ* in the Flesh. They only saluted the Promise afar off, and died in the Faith of it.

4. *Christ* came not presently, deferr'd his appearance, to teach us the more to prize him now he is come, and to rejoice in him. *Hope*, deferr'd, makes the Heart sick, *Prov. 13. 12.* but when it is accomplished, 'tis a Tree of Life. Hath he cost the Church so much longing, and searching, and praying? Sure then the Church will welcom him gladly, embrace him firmly, retain him constantly.

Those that have been long without Children, when God sends them a Son, he is double welcom to them, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and *Joseph*, they were long sued for, before they were obtained; and accordingly beloved. *Quod diu quæritur, solet dulcius inveniri*, saith *S. Aug.* The Church before *Christ* was like barren *Hannah*, weeping, and sorrowing, and begging of a Son: now that *Christ* is born, it becomes us

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to be like fruitful *Hannah*, rejoicing at his birth. *I was the Woman that prayed for this Child, and the Lord hath given the Petition which I have asked of him.* *Hannah's Song*, saith *S. Aug.* 'tis not, *Canticum unius fœminæ pro filio, sed totius Ecclesiæ pro Christo.* It becomes the Church to sing *Hannah's Song* for the birth of *Christ*. The Church after much search, hath found out, not the *lost Groat*, but an invaluable Treasure; not a stray Sheep, but the holy Lamb of God; not a forlorn Prodigal, but the only-Begotten and Beloved of the Father; it becomes us to rejoice. That's the first, He came not in the beginning of Time.

2. Neither did he stay till the last period, and end of Time; That so, in all differences of time, Faith might have an employment. *Christ, yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever, Heb. 13. 8.* The Patriarchs, they believed, in *Christum futurum*, in *Christ* afterwards to be exhibited: The Apostles, and the Saints of that Age, they believed in *Christum præsentem*, they enjoy'd his bodily presence; they saw and believed on him, present amongst them. Christians now, they believe, in *Christum præteritum*, come, and gone again into Heaven. They that came before, and they that followed after, they all sung *Hosanna*. The Patriarchs they went before; the Christian Church, that follows after; both sing *Hosanna*, *Blessed is he that comes to us in the name of the Lord.* As Kings, when they go in State, have their Uihers before them, and their Attendants after them, both honour their appearance. *Christ* in this fulness of time, is as the Sun at Noon-tide; East, and West are both enlightened by him. It shews us the efficacy of *Christ*, and of his Blood; it was effectual, not only when it was shed, but before it was shed; and after it was shed. It sanctified, and saved the Primitive Saints; and the last upon Earth shall be saved by it.

That's the first fulness of time, in the natural consideration of it. In the middle of Time, when the World was at the Zenith, then *Christ* came.

II. There is another *fulness of time*, that's *Constituta plenitudo temporis*; that time that was set, and decreed, and appointed by God. For not only *Christ's* coming, but all the circumstances of Time and Place were forelaid, and determined; and *Christ's* coming into the World, gave a *fulness* and accomplishment unto that Time.

That we may conceive how our Saviour's Coming brought a *fulness* to Time, we must know, there were foregoing times, in which *Christ* was made known to the Church; but yet there was an emptiness in those times; His Birth and Incarnation gave a *fulness* to them.

There were three Preparative foregoing Times, which *Christ's* Coming fulfilled:

1. Was *Tempus Promissionis*; that Time and Age of the Church when the Promise of *Christ* was first made and publish'd; that was the time from *Adam* to *Moses*. The Church of God lived, and supported it self with that Promise, That afterwards, in God's good time, *Christ* should be born. Now Promises, are all for hereafter; they bring nothing in present. Indeed Faith knows how to make use of them, but in themselves they are but empty, they exhibit nothing. They give good Assurance, but put us not into Possession. A Man may be rich in Bills, and Bonds, and Specialties, but yet be in actual want: as Men lay up Evidences among their Treasures. But *Christ's* coming fulfill'd those Promises, gave a *Tea* and *Amen* to them. The Prayer of *David*, was the Prayer of the whole Church, *Think upon thy Servant, as concerning thy word, in which thou hast caused me to put my trust.* It spread these Evidences before God, as *Hezekiah* did the Letter that was sent to him. Ey, but Promises turn'd into Performances, is a true *fulness*. That's the first; the time of Performance is a real *fulness* to the times of Promises.

2. A second Time was, *Tempus Typorum*, the Time and Age of the Church, furnish'd with Types and Prefigurations of him; that was the time of the Church under *Moses*. It added to the former time. That had but a Promise of him; these Types resembled him, described him to them, seal'd up, and assur'd his coming to them. They were to the Faith of the Church, as Signs to represent him, as Tokens and Pledges to assure him to them: But yet this falls short of *fulness*.

Seals

Serm. II.

Seals and Pledges are good Assurances, but actual Possession is a great deal better. *Annulus iste nihil valet, hæreditas est quam reposco.* The Writing and Seal is not the thing we look for; the Estate and Inheritance is that we wait for. Now *Christ's* coming fill'd up the imperfections and emptiness of these Types. They had the emptiness of a shadow, He brings the substance and *fulness* of the Body. *Col. 2. 17. They were but shadows of things to come, but the Body is of Christ.* His coming fill'd the Temple, as the Cloud fill'd the Tabernacle. He fill'd that House with glory, when *Christ* came into it.

3. A third Time was, *Tempus Prophetiarum*; the Age of the Prophets; that was yet a fuller Time: then there was a more clear and particular foretelling the very manner and circumstances of his Birth and Incarnation. *Esay* calculates, and foretells the time; At such a year, then the *Messias* shall come. *Micah* foretells the City where he shall be born; At *Bethlehem*. They bring it nearer, and closer home; but all of them fail, and fall short of this *fulness*. They were but as *Heralds* and *Ushers*, forewarning, and preparing the way before him. *The Testimony of Jesus, is the Spirit of Prophecie*: His coming gives a being to all their Predictions. They all sat like *Jonas* to see when their Prophecies should be fulfilled; like *Elijah* on Mount *Carmel*, looking often, and often, for his blessed Appearance. His presence accomplish'd them, and gave them their *fulness*. Thus God dealt with his Church, as *Boaz* with *Ruth*; first he affords her some gleanings; then lets fall handfuls to her; then fills her Vail with a Measure of clean Corn dressed and winnowed; then at last marries himself to her in his Incarnation.

So then; Is *Christ's* Coming the *fulness of time*? What improvement shall we make of this point for practice?

1. It should teach us to take notice of our happiness, that were kept and reserved to live in those times that are fulfilled by our Saviour's coming. It is a great Blessing of God to be born in good times, in days of Peace and Plenty. We pity our Fore-fathers, who lived in those Swording times, when all was in an uprore; and after-ages will do the like for us. And one bewail'd himself, that he was born, *nec solo, nec cælo, nec seculo erudito*, in barbarous times. How happy are Christians, who have all the Mysteries of our Redemption accomplish'd in these days of the Gospel? What saith our Saviour to his Disciples? *Luke 10. 23. Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see; for I tell you many Kings and Prophets, have desired to see those things that ye see, and have not seen them.* *David*, and *Solomon*, and *Josiah*, how would they have thrown down their Crowns at his Feet, and adored him? Those Truths concerning *Christ*, which we count common and vulgar, and slight and neglect them, how would they have ravished the Spirits of those Saints that were before us? The Mystery of the Trinity, what dark intimations of it to the Saints of old? That *Christ* was both God and Man, *David's* Lord, and *David's* Son, it posed all the Doctors in *Israel*, how to conceive it; *Matt. 22.* Our Saviour's Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, we scorn to spend time to learn them our selves, and teach them others; and yet the Angels, and Arch-Angels, stand astonished at them. They before us received but the Promise, God providing a better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect, *Heb. 11. 40. 1 Sam. 16. Samuel* would not sit down to the Sacrifice, till young *David* was brought from tending the Sheep. *Christ's* Sacrifice was delay'd, till the *fulness of the Gentiles might come in*. The Patriarchs were the eldest Sons, and they were put off with a Kid; the fat Calf was kill'd for us; the best Wine was kept last, till now, to entertain us.

2. This *fulness* on Gods part, doth challenge and require *fulness* on our part.

1. *Fulness of knowledge*. On God's part *Christ* is fully revealed, all the Mystery of Godliness laid open, and unfolded; 'tis our duty then fully to know him. The dim, dark, imperfect knowledge of the Jewish Church will not suffice; the vail is now taken off, and we all with open Face may see and behold him. *When I was a Child, I spake as a Child, I understood as a Child*; that was the condition of those times. Christians must be grown Men, of a ripe age in understanding. *The times of our former ignorance, God regarded not, saith St. Paul, but now he warns every*

every man, *Act. 17. 30.* The times of Christianity are foretold to be knowing *Serm. II.*
 times; Every man shall know me, from the least of them, to the greatest of them,
Jer. 31. 34. The Earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters
 cover the Sea, saith the Prophet *Habakkuk*; a Spring-tide of knowledge. *Zachary*
 foretels, that the feeblest Christian shall be as *David*. *John Baptist*, a great en-
 lightned Prophet; yet the least in the Kingdom of Heaven may be greater than he,
 in the Mysteries of Religion.

This fulness on God's part requires of us,

2. *Fulness* of Faith, and of stedfast Assurance. We owe our Faith to Gods
 bare Promises; Shall we not fully believe his real Performances? The Saints be-
 fore *Christ* met with many difficulties in believing: All of them are removed, that
 they cannot hinder our perswasion. There were four Difficulties that attended the
 Promise of *Christ*, as it was propounded to the Patriarchs:

1. Was *Obscuritas*; They saw all in a dim light; all things were made
 known in much obscurity; they had but the light of a Candle to discern by: the
 light of the Sun shines out to us.

2. Was *Generalitas*; *Christ* was promised to them in more general terms,
 not so distinctly and personally as he is to us. They heard of a blessed Seed to be
 born, that is all their Faith fastned on. We know who he is, *Jesus the Son of*
Mary; he is pointed out to us *ἐκτυλοῦσίντως*, with special circumstances. *Hic, &*
Nunc, breeds distinct knowledge.

3. Was *Improbabilitas*; The Promise was propounded to them with some
 Improbabilities. *A Virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a Son: How can this thing*
be? Yes, we know it is performed; that holy *Virgin* hath conceived and born
 him. Performances confute all improbabilities. *Can there come any good out of*
Nazareth? Come and see.

4. Was *Longinquitas*; The Promise of *Christ*, made to the Fathers, was
 for a long time after; many hundred years to be spent ere *Christ* should come.
 Tell a Man what shall happen a thousand years hence, you can hardly perswade
 him. *The Prophecie is for many days to come*, said those mockers in *Ezekiel*. We
 need not stretch our Faith so far. The Promise is before us. With *Thomas* we may
 lay hold on him, and say, *My Lord, and my God*.

3. Hath *Christ* brought a fulness with him? It must work in us fulness of con-
 tent, and satisfaction; rest fully in him, and in his plentiful Redemption. The
 fulness of *Christ* is abundantly able to satisfy, and fill up all our desires; *Fills the*
Soul with marrow and fatness. All other cravings of the Soul may be quieted for
 a time, but they return again as eager as ever; 'tis like a dream of Meat, saith
 the Prophet, and when he awakes, his Soul is empty. This Heavenly Manna, it
 breeds Appetite, and yet it pinches not; it satisfies the Soul, and yet it cloyes
 not. Indeed *Christ* hath in him all that we need, or can possibly wish for. He is
 the poor man's Riches, the despised man's Honour, the hungry man's Food,
 the sick man's Health, and the dying man's Life. Hast thou gained him? Say;
 'Tis enough, Lord; *Return to thy rest, O my Soul*, the Lord hath replenish'd thee.
 When *Simeon* had *Christ* in his Arms, he had enough, then willing to die; he
 had seen his Saviour.

4. Hath God fulfilled his Promise to us? It requires we should fulfill our
 Promises to him: Not fulness on God's part, and emptiness on ours; fast on his
 part, loose on ours. The Son of God, *Jesus Christ*, was not *Yea*, and *Nay*, *2 Cor.*
1. 19. His coming to us, was not like the willing-unwilling Son in the Gospel;
 first he would go, and then he would not. Not one word hath fallen to the ground
 of all that he promised us. And shall our promises to him be *yea* and *nay*?
 The Promises that have passed twixt God and us, are mutual; not simply free,
 but pactional and foederal; *Do, ut des; facio, ut facias*; in the form of a Co-
 venant, and by way of stipulation. *Moses* calls it a mutual Avouchment: We
 avouch him to be our God, he avoucheth us to be his People, and that's strong
 and binding, *Deut. 26. 17.* Thus *Joshua* exhorts the People to obedience, *Ye*
know in all your Hearts, and in all your Souls, that not one thing hath failed of all

Serm. II. *the good which the Lord hath promised you, all is come to pass.* Take heed of being false in his Covenant. He performs all, we just nothing.

5. At the fulness of time God made this great, Promise good to his Church; It must have a double operation upon our Faith:

1. It must settle our Faith.

2. It must order our Faith, and reliance upon God.

1. It must settle our Faith in the hopeful expectation of all other Promises. This grand Promise of Christ, 'tis *Matrix omnium promissionum*, and, *Pabulum Fidei*; the foun-
tain that Faith feeds upon; it gives strength to all other Promises; *In him all are Yea, and Amen.* He hath not spared his own Son, with him he can deny us nothing. *Accessorium sequitur Principale*; other Promises are accessories and appurtenances to this Promise. *Manoah's Wife* argued strongly, *Would God destroy us, he would not have promised us a Son.* Hath God made good the Promise of his Son? He will fail us in nothing. *All his ways are Mercy and Truth*; Mercy in Promising, Truth in performing. As it must settle our Faith, keep it from wavering; so,

2. It must order our Faith, keep it from precipitancy; too much hastening. Our Faith must not antedate the Promises of God; in their due time they shall be accomplished. As to every thing God hath set a season, so he hath to his Promises. *Luke 1. 20.* See the date God sets to them, *They shall be fulfilled in their season.* Thus the Prophet sets back the over-hasty expectation of the Jews for the overthrow of their Enemies. *Habak. 2. 3.* he tells them, *The Vision is yet for an appointed time, at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* It is good not only to hope, but to wait for the Salvation of God. We should answer, and check our over-hasty cravings, as Christ did, *Mine hour is not yet come.* When it is come, Salvation shall come flying upon the Wings of the Wind. Joseph in Prison, made means for enlargement, it succeeded not, until the time that his word came; the word of the Lord tried him, and delivered him, *Psal. 115.* Thus the Hebrews had their set time for enlargement, the self-same day that God had determined. At the end of seventy years they returned from Babylon. The Lord, he doth not *χρησιζων*, but *ευσπλαρν*, he is not slack, but waits to have mercy upon us, in the best season, and time of mercy.

We come,

Secondly, to the benefit it self accomplish'd for us; God sent his Son. We will take the particulars as they lie. So here are three things considerable;

1. The Author, God:

2. His Action, He sent:

3. The Person who must effect and perform this Redemption for us, that's his Son.

1. The Author of this great benefit of sending, is God. The Scripture still ascribes the sending of Christ, unto God the Father. This gracious Action it is appropriated unto him. Hence he is called, *the Gift of God*, *Joh. 4. 10.* So *Joh. 3. 16.* *He gave his only begotten Son.* So, *Joh. 17. 23.* praying to his Father, he adds, *They have believed; that thou hast sent me.* So, *Acts 3. 26.* S. Peter assures the Jews, *God hath sent his Son to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.*

And two Congruities there are, that God should send his Son to redeem us:

1. Congruity is grounded upon that Order, and relation which is betwixt the Persons in the glorious Trinity. As is their Being, so is their Working. The Father hath his Being from himself, so he hath his Working. We never read that the Father was sent by the Son, or by the Holy Ghost. He is *Fons Deitatis*, the Fountain and Original of the Deity. He is of himself, and works of himself. But the Son hath his Being from the Father by Eternal Generation; and all his Operations and Actions flow from the Father, *Joh. 5. 19.* *The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.* Thus Christ refers all his performance of our Salvation, to the sending of the Father. *Joh. 4. My meat is, to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.* And again, *Joh. 9. 4. I must work the works*

works of him that sent me. God the Father communicates all these gracious works to his Son, and sent him to perform them. Serm. II.

2. A second Congruity, why God the Father must be the Author of our Redemption, is, Because by special Appropriation he is the Author of our Creation; and none other must Redeem us, but he who did Create us.

1. The right of Redemption;
2. The glory of Redemption;
3. The duty of Redemption; all belong to him.

1. We were his by right of Creation, and that was an indefeasible right. Though we by sin lost our right in God, yet God did not lose his right in us. Now Redemption belongs to him, to whom belongs the original right of Possession. *I am thine, O save me; thine hands have made me. Mine own I will bring again, as I did sometimes from the depth of the Sea.* The stray lost Sheep was the Shepherd's still, he had the only right to recover it. None but God could lay claim to us, and therefore none but God could Redeem us.

2. None must Redeem us, but he who Created us; the glory of our Redemption must belong to none but to the Author of our Creation. Had any but God achieved our Redemption, more glory had been due to a Creature for Redeeming us, than to God for Creating us. The Work of Redemption, 'tis far more glorious than the Work of Creation. In it shines more glorious Wisdom, Goodness, Power. Now no Creature must equal God in glory, much less exceed him. The most glorious Work belongs to the most glorious God.

3. None must Redeem us, but God who Created us; the benefit of Redemption doth more deeply oblige us, than the benefit of Creation. We owe more for our Redemption, than for our Creation. Before he made us, we were nothing; before he redeem'd us, we were worse than nothing. We owe greater thanks to him who redeem'd us by his Son's Blood, than to him who Created us only by his Breath. More Duties and Services are to be performed to him as our Saviour, than as to our Maker. Should any but God redeem us, we should be more deeply engaged to a Creature, than to our Creator, God blessed for evermore.

We have seen the Author: Let us see,

II. The Action, *He sent.* Our Saviour's Incarnation, for the working of our Redemption, is by no one expression so often made known to us, as by this of *Sending.* Christ makes it the sum of our Christian Faith; *That the World may believe that thou hast sent me, Joh. 11.*

It is a pregnant expression, and affords us divers truths for our Observation.

1. Christ's Incarnation was a *Sending* of him; that's *Actus liberae dispensationis*, an Action of freedom, and voluntary dispensation. Not (as some erroneously conceived it) as if his *Sending*, had been his Making, and giving him his Being. It was Nestorius his Heresie, That the Person of Christ had no Being before his Incarnation, but then had his beginning. No, his *Sending* was no Natural Production, but a gracious employment, and voluntary dispensation. He who was *Sent*, was before he was *Sent*, Joh. 16. 28. *I came forth from the Father, and came into the World. Again, I leave the World, and go unto the Father. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, Prov. 8. 22.* There is his Eternal Generation. *But he rejoiced to be in the habitable parts of the Earth, he delighted to be with the Sons of Men.* There was his voluntary and gracious *Sending*, in his Incarnation. Though he was born at Bethlehem, yet his goings forth were from of old, from everlasting, Micah 5. 2.

2. Christ was *Sent* to work our Redemption: *Sending*, it is *Actus specialis Intentionis*; he came to be a Saviour to us, upon special intention. It gives a great assurance to our Faith, that Christ undertook this Work, not occasionally, but purposely; it was the errand he came about, it was the end and aim of his Incarnation. Nor, as David saved Nabal's flock, while he was in the Wilderness, for his own safety; only while he was there, he did Nabal that kindness: Nor was he like the good Samaritan, that travel'd upon his own occasions, and chanced

Serm. II.

upon the wounded Man, and so step'd out of his way to relieve, and succour him; but it was his only business. *He came to seek, and to save that which was lost, Matth. 18. 11.* Now surely he will not frustrate the main end of his Nativity. He was, separated to this work from his Mothers Womb; *Sent from the Bosom of his Father to accomplish it.*

3. *Christ came, and yet his Father Sent him; it is Actus mutui consensus:* He came, and so it was his own Act: and his Father Sent him, so it was his Father's Act. Both join'd, and agreed, in this work of our Salvation. Indeed the Father and the Son, they always do the same things; but yet more expressly their consent is observable in our Redemption. The Scripture makes it a matter of their counsel, and consultation; a matter of Covenant, and Compact, 'twixt the Father and the Son. *Ask of me and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, Psal. 2. In the Volume of thy Book it was written of me; then said I, Lo, I come; I delight to do thy Will, O my God, Psal. 40. 7.* Both concurred; He came not of himself, but his Father Sent him; *Come, I will send thee to thy Brethren, said Jacob to Joseph; Go, I pray thee, and see whether it be well with them.* They both joined in this Work, as Abraham and Isaac did in the Sacrificing of Isaac; no striving, or wrestling, or refusing, but a joint consent. The Father Sends him, and he came willingly, as Jephtha's Daughter to her Father, *Do as thou hast vow'd.* It was not the love of Christ only, without, or against his Father's liking: not like Jonathan's kindness, sore against his Father Saul's Will: He undertook not our cause, nor vanquish'd our Enemies, as Jonathan made his on-set on the Philistines, his Father not knowing it; nor did God part with him unwillingly, and upon much importunity, as Jacob did with Benjamin, to Ransom his Brother; no, God highly approved his Son's willingness in offering and undertaking this great Service; they both join'd in this Work.

4. *God Sent his Son to redeem us; it is Actus Autoritatis,* it carries with it strength of full Warrant, and Authority. He came with an ample Commission to effect this Work. And Christ publish'd this Commission at his first Preaching. *Luke 4. 17, 18. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, he hath anointed me, he hath sent me to deliver the Captives. The Father that sent me gave me commandment, Joh. 12. Him hath God the Father sealed, Joh. 6.* Set him up to be the Prince and Author of Salvation.

It makes much to the fulness of this Work, That Christ steps not in, as a private mediating Friend, but is employ'd by God, comes with full Authority to negotiate and transact the Work of our Redemption. St. Paul terms him, the *Apostle of our Profession, Heb. 3.* He had Apostolical Commission from God to effect it. It must teach us perfectly to trust in him, and to commend the care of our Salvation into his Hands, whom God hath laid this Office upon, to solicit our Salvation.

5. *God Sent Christ to us. Sending, it is Actus Præventionis;* 'tis a preventing favour. He stays not till we make means, and send Petitions, and Intercessions to him, but is first in this Office of Reconciliation. It had been much to have admitted a Treaty upon our seeking, and importunity; no, he prevents us with his loving kindness, expects not till we send unto him. Our going to God, as St. Chrysostom notes, 'tis not called in Scripture *περιεργει*, but *προεργαζην*; He fetch'd us, and brought us, we went not of our selves; *Non motu nostro, sed ductu suo.* St. John insists much upon this Preventing Love of God. *In this was manifested the love of God, that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we may live through him, 1 Joh. 4. 9.* And, *vers. 10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins.* He sent to us, when none of us ever thought of sending to Him. What the *Sbunamite* said to Elisha, Mankind may truly say to God, *Did I desire a Son of my Lord? Did we ever think of this means of Salvation? No, the whole World,*

1. Either lay in security, never minding, nor considering our woful condition.

2. Or else were up in hostility; so far from sending for Peace, that we were bidding defiance to him, practising enmity.

3. Or

3. Or were sunk in despair, not daring to think any thought of Pardon, expecting nothing but destruction; and then he graciously thought upon us, and sent for our deliverance. *Serm. II.*

6. *God Sent his Son*; Sending, it is *Actus Demissionis*; a great *συγκατάβασις* (so the Fathers call *Christ's Incarnation*), an Act of great Vouchsafing, of much Condescension: For God to Send to us, to dispatch Messengers, begin Treaties, make offers of Reconciliation, nay, *Preces descendere in omnes*, to beseech us to be reconciled; admirable dignation! He hath all the advantages of the better against us, why should he seek, and Send, and sue to us for peace and attonement?

1. He is *Fortior*; all the Strength is on his side. Now *Christ* tells us, *Luke 14. 31.* that in case of enmity, he who finds himself the weaker, should send Embassages, and desire conditions of Peace. Alas! we are infinitely the weaker, not able to annoy him, or to grapple with him. *St. Paul* gives us this Item, *Rom. 5. 6.* *When we were yet without strength, Christ died for us.*

2. He is *Dignior*; that's a second advantage on his side; far above us in all Honour and Dignity. One would think, the more mean and inferiour should Send, and seek, and sue to his better, if he have offended him. What saith *Elizabeth* to the *Virgin Mary*? *Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?* *Luk. 1. 43.* What stooping is this, and condescension, that the *High*, and the *Holy One* should send to us in our base condition? *πάντων ἀνωτέρω* is made *πάντων χατώτερος* καὶ τὸν συγκαταβάσιν, saith *Chrysostom*; he makes himself lower than the lowest by this condescension.

3. He is *Pars læsa*; that's a third advantage he hath against us. The injury and wrong is done to him, the offence is committed by us: Reason would, that we who had wronged him, should come in first, and sue to him. As *Shimei*, because he had wronged *David*, came first of all his Tribe and Countrey to meet King *David*, and to make his peace with him. In our petty wranglings, when the *Potsheards* contend with the *Potsheards* of the Earth, we stand upon this, He hath wronged me; yet God abates this. All the right is of his side, and yet he Sends to us. Whole Charity sticks not here; we are ready to say, He hath wronged me, let him seek and sue to me first.

4. He is *Independens, autæxus*; his Self-sufficiency needs not our Friendship, and Reconciliation. Amongst Men, we must sometimes put up wrongs, and pass by them; we may stand in need of those who have now offended us. *Nec possum tecum vivere, nec sine te.* Superiours may have such use of their Inferiours, that they must be glad to seek to them. *The Head cannot say to the Foot, I have no need of thee.* But God stands not in need of us, or of our service. Had we all perished in our Rebellion, he had lost nothing. *Eliphaz* in *Job*, tells us that: *Can a Man be profitable unto God? Is it any gain to him, that thou art righteous?* *Job 22. 2.* No, had we all perished, he had his Holy Angels to serve him: nay, had they all revolted, his glory and happiness is included in himself, and no ways depends upon the service of his Creatures. God gives *Abraham* an Item of this, when he made his Covenant with him, *I am God All-sufficient, walk before me, and I will make my Covenant with thee*, *Gen. 17.* It was not necessity, but mercy, to Covenant with *Abraham*.

Yet see! he abates this, and all other advantages: Though he be the Stronger, and needs not fear us; though he be the better, and so may despise us; though he be wronged by us, and so may expect submission from us; though he hath not the least need of us, and so may neglect and cashier us for ever; yet see his wonderful Vouchsafing and Condescending, he Sends and seeks to us. We may well break out with *David's* admiration, *2 Sam. 7. 19.* *Is this the manner of Man, O Lord God?* Would one Man thus deal with another? Stoop so low, to such treaties, and intreaties of Reconciliation; send, and solícite, and importune for agreement? Nay, verily; 'tis the unmatched example of God's love to us, thus to make after us; to Send, and to Send his Son, to accomplish our Peace, and Reconciliation.

SEVEN SERMONS

Preached upon

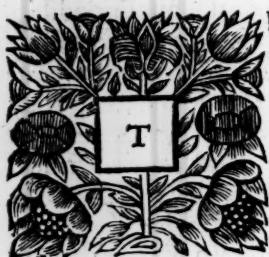
*The History of our Saviour's Transfiguration, as it is
represented by the three Evangelists,*

S. MATTHEW,
S. MARK,
S. LUKE.

The First Sermon.

S. Luke IX. 28.

And it came to pass, about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a Mountain to pray, &c.



HIS passage of Scripture, is a remarkable relation of our Saviour's glorious *Transfiguration*; his laying aside his Garments of Frailty, and Mortality; and his assuming to himself his Robes of Majesty and Glory. As *David* seeing his Son *Solomon's* Succession questioned, and opposed, sends him to Mount *Gibon*, commands *Zadock* and *Nathan* to Anoint, and Proclaim him King: so here; *Christ's* Kingdom being opposed, he is by Gods Appointment established: *Moses* and *Elias* adore, and attend him; and a Voice from Heaven declares him *Messias*.

The Text sets out *Christ's* Preparation, and Entrance into this glorious Manifestation of Himself; and the purposed choice of those remarkable Circumstances, in which he was pleased to be Transfigured. And as in Coronations and Triumphs of Kings, all Occurrences are forelaid and ordered for greater Magnificence: so here; every particular is cull'd out, to advance the glory of this Transfiguration.

1. Is the choice of Time; *about an eight days after these sayings.*
2. Is the choice of Attendants; *Peter, James, John.*
3. Is the choice of the Place, fit for this great Work; *A Mountain.*
4. Is the choice of an Holy Preparative Action, *Prayer; He went up into a Mountain to pray.*

First, Is the choice of time: And as in Time, there are two things:

1. Order.
2. Measure.
 1. The one is *Succession*;
 2. The other, *Duration*. So here;

1. There

1. There is *Ordo*, or *Succesſio*, in theſe words; *After theſe ſayings.*
2. There is *Duratio*, in theſe words; *About an eight days.*

I. Is *Ordo*, or *Succesſio*; *After theſe ſayings*; and it reflects back to ſeveral remarkable paſſages going before, in his immediate laſt diſcourſe with his Diſciples.

1. Is *Post Petri confeſſionem*; after S. Peter's Confeſſion, *verſ. 20.* Thou art the Chriſt of God. After this Confeſſion of the Diſciple's Faith, then he was Tranſfigured. It carries with it a double Intendment:

1. Of Confirmation of their Faith:
2. Of Reward of their Faith.

1. An Intendment of Confirmation: Before, they confeſſed and believed: And now again, their faith is miraculoſly confirmed and ratified. It is God's gracious courſe, thus to ſupport, and ſtrengthen the beginnings of a true faith. Revelations, Viſions, Miracles, Signs from Heaven, all ſhall ſerve for further Confirmation. Thus God to Abaz, *Ask thee a Sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above, Eſa. 7. 11.* If it be true faith, he will make it ſtronger. He is always watering this grain of Muſtard-ſeed. Thus to Nathaneel, *Joh. 1. 50, 51.* *Believeſt thou, becauſe I ſaid unto thee, I ſaw thee under the Fig-Tree? Thou ſhalt ſee greater things than theſe—Ye ſhall ſee Heaven open, and the Angels of God aſcending, and deſcending upon the Son of Man.*

2. An Intendment of Remuneration. This faithful Confeſſion is honoured and rewarded with an evident Revelation, a glorious Viſion. This is the method of Gods dealing with his Children. The ground of faith, is not ſight, and reaſon, and evidence; but the reward of faith, is evidence, and clearneſs of full Representation. Chriſtians are called *Fideles*; *Credentes, non Rationales*; *Aug.* That is the duty of faith; but, the iſſue and end of it, what is that? It ſhall end in Viſion. *Then we ſhall ſee him as he is.* Firſt, faith looks upon his back-parts, and covers its Face, as *Elias* in the Cave; then it is advanced to ſee him face to face, as *Elias* on the Mount. To believe, becauſe we ſee, it is the weakneſs of faith; but to ſee, becauſe we believe, it is the honour of faith. *Aliud eſt videndo credere, aliud credendo videre.*

After theſe ſayings: That,

2. Is, *Post mortis prædictionem, verſ. 22.* The Son of Man muſt ſuffer many things; and be rejected of the Elders, and Chief-Prieſts and Scribes, and be ſlain. After that ſaying, then he was Tranſfigured, he ſhewed his Glory. And ſo it carries with it theſe Intimations:

1. *Quod non ex infirmitate moriturus*; That he was not to die out of Infirmitſy. He who can thus at pleaſure aſſume a ſtate of Immortality, hath no inward neceſſity to die. It was not neceſſity of Nature, but diſpenſation of Grace that expoſed him to death. *Non impotenter, ſed potenter mortuus eſt.* As *Moses* died, not of weakneſs; *His Eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated, Dent. 34. 7.* but upon ſpecial order: So died Chriſt. As *Sampſon*, it was his ſtrength, not his weakneſs that ended him: So Chriſt, he died, *Clamore magno, non ſingultu.* He did not expire with a ſigh, or a groan, but when he had cried with a loud voice, he yielded up the Ghoſt, *Matth. 27. 50.*

2. *Quod non ex vi externa*; That he did not die from any external violence. He who hath the Title of the Lord of life, and can aſſume to himſelf Impaſſibility, What violence can aſſault or annoy him? *No man taketh away my life from me, but I lay it down of my ſelf; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again, Joh. 10. 18.* He who can, *Pertranſire per medium eorum, paſs through the miſt of them, and go his way, Luk. 4. 30.* ſure his Death is not enforced, but aſſumed.

3. *Quod non ex odio paterno*; That he did not die, becauſe his Father hated him. It may be it ſhall be ſaid, *God hath forſaken him*; His Father's diſpleaſure expoſes him. No, that ſcandal is prevented by this glorious manifeſtation of himſelf. He is by an Oracle from Heaven, honour'd, and acknowledg'd the Son of his Father's love.

4. After his Death is foretold, his Glory is diſcovered; That intimates the

Serm. I.

the Order, and Entrance, and Passage into his Kingdom: He did not pass, à *deliciis, ad delicias*. No, but first he must suffer, and then be glorified. Ought not Christ to have suffer'd these things, and then to enter into his glory? *Luk. 24. 26.* First Mount *Calvary* must be ascended, then *Tabor*, and *Olivet*. *Post fel, favum*. He must taste the gall of his Passion; then, after, he shall taste the Honey-Comb of the sweetness of Exaltation.

3. Is *Post Resurrectionis Intimationem*; *vers. 22.* He must be raised the third day; After that saying, then he was Transfigured: And so it reflects upon that saying, in a double notion:

1. *Ut ostenderet possibilitatem Resurrectionis*. He who can make his body thus radiant and resplendent, transform it into such Glory, Why should we judge it impossible, or difficult, to revive, and raise it? Why should we judge it impossible, faith *St. Paul*, for God to raise the dead? *Acts 26. 8.* He hath power to lay it down, and power to take it up again. *Necesse est Spiritui restituatur Templum suum*. Look upon Mount *Tabor*, and this Transfiguration; and then go to *Golgotha*, and doubt not of a Resurrection.

2. *Ut monstraret Modum*. The glory of this Transfiguration, shews the glory of his Resurrection. It was *Prælium Resurrectionis Dominicæ*. It shall not only be a bare recovery of Life, but an advancing of it. *St. Paul* calls it, *His glorious Body*. The High-Priest *Josedech* his vile Garments are taken from him, and precious Garments are given unto him. Consider the glory of this Transfiguration; and then doubt not of the Immortality, Impassibility, Agility, Clarity of the Resurrection.

4. Is, *Post Crucis Impositionem*, *vers. 23, 24.* If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross daily, and follow me. Taking up the Cross, losing of their lives for him: After these sayings, then he was Transfigured. So it imports a seasonable Consolation. They must endure the Cross, part with life; sad tydings! an hard saying, Who can bear it? These are things dreadful to Flesh and Blood. Ay, but stay a while, and see him, and his Servants in Glory; that will sweeten all. He purposely gives them a glimpse, and view, and taste of that Glory that shall attend their sufferings. Look upon thy sufferings, and thy Spirit may droop; but get up into the Mountain of Glory, see those Crowns, and Scepters, and White Robes, and then you will be encouraged. These light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, *2 Cor. 4. 17.* Thus Christ sweetly enterchanges his dealings with his Servants:

1. Having put them into the sad meditation of his Death, he shews them his Glory.

2. Having rejoiced them with that, then he allays it with the remembrance of his Death; again reminds them of his Passion.

5. Is, *Post Gloriæ Promiseionem*, *vers. 24.* He tells them hereafter they shall save their lives, at his coming in Glory. After that saying, he is Transfigured. So it is, *Futuræ Gloriæ Representatio*: He puts them not off to future expectations, and reveries. *Totum id quod Christiani sumus, spes est*; says hard to some mens Faith: Ay but he gives them in present a glimpse of Glory. These first fruits, and Preludes of Heaven, serve to support the infirmity of Faith. *Sobusta fides*, strong Faith can hold out without sight, cares not for present pay, for any thing in hand; but *Infirma fides*, weak Faith would droop, without some taste of future Glory. See then, be not faithless, but faithful. As *Jonathan* fainting, with one taste of Honey recovered sight and vigour; so the least relish of that hidden Manna revives Faith, and puts strength and alacrity into a believing Christian; makes him as a Giant refresh'd with Wine. As the bunch of Grapes from *Eschol* made *Caleb* encourage the People, made them forget *Egypt*, endure the Wilderness; so this view of Heaven, it puts Spirit into us. Otherwise, we are hardly drawn with naked Promises, *Spem periculo emere*. Therefore, *Hoc infirmitatis remedium, ut presentibus sustineatur infirmitas*. *Ambros.*

6. Is, *Post Regni mentionem*, *v. 27.* I tell you of a truth, there be some standing

ing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God: After that saying, he was Transfigured. So it is *Erroris correctio*. They never heard of *Christ's Kingdom*, but they imagined a terrestrial outward Kingdom. *Christ*, to make them understand the condition of his Kingdom, sequesters their thoughts from outward things, shews them the Spiritual, Supernatural, Celestial, nature of his Kingdom. *Hierusalem* comes down from Heaven; *It is above, the Mother of us all*. All outward things are *Bona Scabelli*, the good things of his Foot-stool, not *Bona Throni*, not the good things of his Throne; *Solatia miserorum*, the comforts of the Miserable, not *Gaudia beatorum*, the joys of the Blessed.

So much of the first, *Ordo, & Successio*. The other is,

II. *Mensura, & continuatio*; *About an eight days after*; St. Matthew and St. Mark say, *Six days*; St. Luke here, *Eight*.

1. They say more exactly; S. Luke not so precisely, but *about eight days*.
2. Even both say precisely true. They speak Exclusively, leaving out the day of this Prediction, and of the Transfiguration; and mention the six days intervening; S. Luke speaks Comprehensively, reckons both the day he spake it, and the day he performed it; and so makes up *eight*.

Now the exact setting down these days, carries with it a double purpose;

1. Is a Moral signification;
2. Is a Mystical.

1. Is a Moral signification. It was *after eight days*. He stays, and defers so long;

1. To stir up expectation, and to quicken their desires to see that Glory. Moderate delays serve to set an edge, and to quicken our hope and expectation. Thus *Elijah* delays, and puts off *Elisba* from seeing his Rapture, to enflame his desire the more to behold it. *The Lord is not slack as men count slackness*; but, to enlarge our desires, he seems to delay. Thus he dealt with the *Canaanitish Woman*.

2. It was *after eight days*, he stay'd no longer. Why? he might have deferred longer; It was in these terms that he promised, *before they die*. Time enough therefore hereafter. Indeed for us, if we promise any thing to God before we die, we must do it presently, because we know not the time of our death; As the *Rabbins* say, if a man vowed to be a *Nazarite* one day before his Death, he was to be so presently, because this day may be the last day; but God knows these times and seasons, and the number of our days. What then? yet after eight days he performs it. In all his Promises he is better, and fuller, and speedier than his word. It is enough, if thou hast comfort, though it be at the day of Death. Oh! but *nescit tarda molimina*. He sends to his Disciples to meet him in Galilee.

2. Is a mystical signification. *Eight days*. Not only the Fathers, *Chrysostom, Ambrose*, others who delight in Allegories; but even later Writers, who are more sparing in those allegorical accommodations of Scripture; they sweetly conceit a double Mystery:

1. Is the Mystery of *Christ's Resurrection*; He was Transfigured on the eighth day; raised in Glory on the eighth day afterwards. This reason St. Aug. gives why the number of *Eight* is consecrated in Scripture. The Circumcision, it was *Octavo die, ut figuretur Dominica Resurrectio*; that was on the eighth day, to figure *Christ's Resurrection*. Many legal cleansings, and offerings were on the eighth day. Thus St. Aug. descants upon some Titles of the *Psalms in Octavis*, All prefigurations of *Christ's Resurrection*.

2. Is the Mystery of our Transfiguration, and Resurrection. Six Ages of the World must pass first. *Post sex dies, gloriæ Dominica habitus ostenditur. Sex millium annorum temporibus evolutis, Regni cælestis honos prefiguratur*; *Hilarius*. Six Ages, the World's continuance; the seventh day, that's the day of Judgment; then the eighth is *dies æternitatis*, when we shall be taken up in glory.

So much of the first Circumstance; the choice of time; *About an eight days after these sayings*.

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Secondly,

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Secondly; Another Circumstance, is the choice of Attendants; he took Peter, and John, and James. And herein observe these three Considerations.

1. *Discipuli, comites;*
2. *Tres discipuli;*
3. *Hi tres.*

I. His attendants are his Disciples; why not the People, the Priests and Pharisees? As Judas saith (not Iscariot) Lord, *How is it that thou wilt manifest thy self unto us, and not unto the World?* In likelyhood, it would have convinced, and converted many.

1. It was a Revelation; and Revelations of Mysteries are not for Infidels, but for Believers. *To you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to others it is not given, Matt. 13. 11.* For common Illumination, he enlightens every man; but special revelation, it is *the Childrens Bread, the hidden Manna.* He expounded all to his Disciples apart. As every Subject may know the Kings Laws; but his choice Counsellors, are only acquainted with his Secrets: So the Law of God is exposed to all; but the Mysteries of his Kingdom are concealed from many, and communicated only to his own.

2. It was a Revelation of his Glory, and therefore not to all, but only to his Disciples. It was the Oeconomy of his Incarnation, to carry secretly his Divinity in the Dark-Lanthorn of his Humanity; so to make way to his Death, and Passion. *Had they known the Lord of life and glory, they would not have Crucified him.* Hence he charges them, not to publish it till after his Passion. Thus the greatest Rabbins never conceived how David's Son could be David's Lord; and therefore the Jews to this day, because in some places they find predictions of Divinity, sometimes of humanity, not knowing how to accord them, imagine two Christs; *Filium Joseph*, he that shall suffer, and die; and *Filium David*, that shall Rule and Reign.

3. It was a Revelation of the Saints after glorification, therefore to Saints only, *This is a name that none knows but he that receives it.* He gives the Earnest only where he will bestow the main substance; the first-fruits of Glory, where he intends the whole Harvest. As Christ after his Resurrection never shewed himself but to the Saints; Before, he did to Priests, Publicans, Pharisees; after, never but to Saints; So in this act of Glory, only to his Disciples. Only St. Paul saw Christ, and heard him; they who were in his Company, neither heard, nor saw, *Act. 9.* St. Gregory enquiring how Satan appeared before God, among the Sons of God; Oh, saith he, he was *præsens absenti*, and so *absens præsentis*; He appeared because God observed him, not that he saw God. As of the appearances of the Old Testament, it is said, *None shall see him, and live*; so it is true Spiritually, *None shall see him and die.*

II. *Tres Discipuli, non omnes.* Three of his Disciples, not all.

1. Three is a sufficient number to testify this Miracle.

2. Judas a reprobate, he was not to be admitted, he was unworthy of it. Therefore, lest he should murmur, and repine, and grow worse by it, others are left out.

3. *Ut sit locus ordini;* Even among his Disciples he observed an order, and precedence. Some were more eminent and of nearer admission, Cabinet-Counsellors. We see Peter durst not speak to Christ, but beckons to John to do it.

4. *Ut sit locus fidei.* These were taken to see, and testify; the rest were left, to hear and believe. As Moses sent Spies to view the Land of Canaan; and they were to report what they saw to others.

5. *Ut sit locus modestiæ.* Transfiguratus in monte coram paucis, Crucifixus in urbe coram omnibus.

III. *Hi tres.* He singles out Peter, John, and James. Why are these made choice of, and others passed by; We see, at other times he takes these nearer to him, as at the raising of Jairus his Daughter, *Mark. 5. 37.* He excludes all others, admits these; What reasons are there for it?

1. There needs no reason; Sufficient is it, that it is his pleasure. In matters

matters of free favour, it is no *Prospolypse* to pass by some, to admit others. He can cross his hands, as *Jacob* did; give five portions to *Benjamin*, deal more sparingly with others. *Shall I not do with mine own as I please? Etiam Pater, quia sic complacuit.* Serm. I.

2. *Quoad humanum affectum*, *Christ* had his Favourites, those whom he made his darling Disciples. Thus *St. John* was his bosom-Favourite. As it was said of *David*, and *Solomon*, Such an one was the King's friend. These Disciples were thus graced.

3. These three were more eminent for Grace, and Zeal, and Love to *Christ*. *St. Paul* saith, they were counted *Pillars*. The greatest Proficients have a larger dignation; these are let into the Secrets of *Christ*. As among *David's Worthies*, there were the *first three*. Others were valiant among thirty, but they did not attain to the *three first*; so among these holy Colleagues, these were of an high pitch in Grace, and answerably were they honoured.

4. These three were admitted to see his Transfiguration, because these were appointed to assist his Passion, *Matth.* 26. 37. when he underwent his Agony; therefore these are fore-strengthened, and fore-armed by seeing his Glory. This glorious Vision on Mount *Tabor*, fitted them to abide the terror of Mount *Calvary*. Those whom God will single out for the greatest Tryals, he will fit beforehand with the best enablements. *St. Paul* was strengthened, and encouraged in a Vision at *Hierusalem*, before his going to *Rome*; *Be of good cheer Paul; for as thou hast testified of me at Hierusalem, so must thou also bear witness at Rome, Act.* 23. 11.

5. These several Men are singled out upon several Reasons.

1. *Peter* was the forward, zealous Disciple, who led the way to the rest, in that noble Confession of *Christ*; therefore he is singled out to be partaker of this Vision. Again, *Peter* is now overtaken with an errour, is sorry to hear of *Christ's* Death, dissuades him from it; by this Vision therefore he is comforted, reformed, instructed in the mystery of *Christ's* Death and Passion.
2. *James*, he was appointed to be the first Apostle that should die for *Christ*; *Herod* suck'd his Blood first. As they who must be in the front of the Battel, have the choicest Armour, because they are to undertake desperate services; so, because *S. James* was to be the first in the Army Royal, therefore he was admitted to view the glory of this Transfiguration. *Theophylact* saith, that this *Theophania* made him μεγαλοφάνεια, and θεολογία.
3. *John*, he was fore-appointed to be the publisher, and Pen-man of *Christ's* Divinity; and so, above all, he soared highest into Heaven. Therefore was this manifestation of *Christ's* Glory and Divinity made to him. He urges it, *John* 1. 14. *He saw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* So *Peter* makes use of this, *2 Pet.* 1. 18. *We heard a voice which came from Heaven when we were in the Holy Mount.* Thus these Congruities shew why *Hi tres*; why These three:

Now follows,

Thirdly, Another Circumstance, which is the choice of the place. *He led them up to a Mountain.* What Mountain was this? Interpreters differ.

1. Some say, it was Mount *Sinai*, where the Law was given.
2. Others say, it was Mount *Libanus*, that is near to *Cæsarea Philippi*.
3. Most say it was Mount *Tabor*. But it was purposely concealed, to avoid those superstitions that After-ages might imagine, and frame. *S. Peter* calls it, *The holy Mountain*. And hence Papists ground their permanent sanctity of Places, and Pilgrimages. But this Holiness was not permanent but temporary, respectively to this action; as the Wilderness was *holy Ground* while God was present in it.

Now for this recourse of *Christ* to Mountains, it was very frequent. He went up to a Mountain to Preach: *Matt.* 5. 1. He departed into a Mountain to Pray, *Marc.* 6. 46. He went out into a Mountain to Pray, *Luk.* 6. 12. He ascended to Heaven from a Mountain. He appoints *Abraham* to offer up his *Isaac* on a Mountain.

Serm. I. The Law was given on a Mountain. *Moses* saw God's Glory on the Mountain. *Elijah*, he prays on Mount *Carmel*. *Moses* dies on a Mountain; so *Aaron*. Why so? Is God the God of the Mountains, not of the Vallies? or, are the Prayers more acceptable that are there performed, than in other places? No surely. No place now commends our Prayers to God. In all places, Prayers are alike acceptable. As Naturally, so Spiritually, all places are alike distant from Heaven. *Universam terram expiavit; omnis locus oratorium est*, Aug. *Nunc de Britannia aq̄e ac de Hierosolymis patet aula cœlestis*, Hieron. *Elijah's Cave*, *Daniel's Den*, *David's Depths*, *Jeremie's Dungeon*, *Jonah's Whale*, all lie open unto him. *Illic pervium est omne solidum, appertum omne secretum; ei muta respondent, ei silentium confitetur*. Aug.

Indeed Before, the Temple was the place of Prayer. Prayers were more accepted there, than else-where. And so even our publick Church Services, for the solemnity, and joynt-Communion, are most accepted. Otherwise, Religious Prayers where ever they be, are made in the Temple, *si in pace Ecclesiæ, & unitate Corporis Christi*. Aug. Why then doth *Christ* single out a Mountain for Prayer?

1. *Ob solitudinem*; for retiredness and privacy, he withdraws himself from tumults and multitudes, sequesters himself to a more intimate Devotion. This is a blessed opportunity for Devotion, retiredness and solitude. *Christ* bids them enter into their Closet to recollect their thoughts. They Pray in plateis, in the Streets, who suffer their Thoughts to wander in Worldly Cogitations. *Christ*, when he raised the Woman, put out the Minstrels, *Matt. 9.* *Abraham* left his Servants below. *Jacob* sent his Carriages over the River, staid alone to wrestle with God.

2. *Ob elevationem*. This bodily ascent teaches us to raise up our thoughts in Prayer above the sphere of the World. Prayer, it is *Ascensus mentis ad Deum*; the Scale and Ladder to get up to Heaven. We must mount up as Eagles; clamber as *Jonathan* and his Armour-bearer to the top of this Rock. Devout Prayer mounts the Soul up, transports it into Heaven. It makes our Conversation to be in Heaven.

3. *Mons typus cœli*. Heaven is prefigured, and compared to a Mountain. *Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?* *Psal. 24. 3.* *I will lift up mine eyes unto the Hills, from whence cometh my help*, *Psal. 121. 1.* The Temple, the Type of Heaven, was reared on a Mountain. Heaven,

1. It is *stabile*, *ut Mons*; stable as a Mountain, not moved, nor shaken.

2. It is *excellsum*, *ut Mons*; high as a Mountain.

3. It is *amœnum*, delightful; it is *Mons olei*.

4. It is *arduum*, *ut Mons*; much pains to ascend and gain the top of it.

5. It is *securum*. Mountains are places of strength; so is Heaven.

4. *Ibi liberior conspectus Cœli*; it gives a glorious view of the beauty of Heaven, and so administers thoughts of Prayer and Praising. The aspect of that goodly Frame, how should it raise our thoughts to enlarged Meditations? Thus *David* viewing the Heavens, breaks forth into admiration of God: *Psal. 19.* A Psalm penn'd, as some conceive, upon his being a Shepherd, and so lying abroad, and contemplating the Heavens.

O N The Transfiguration.

The Second Sermon.

S. Luke IX. 29.

And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his rayment was white and glistering.

S. Matth. XVII. 2.

He was Transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the Sun, and his rayment was white as the light.

S. Mark IX. 2, 3.

He was Transfigured before them.

And his rayment became shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no Fuller on Earth can white them.



Having seen our Saviour's solemn Preparation unto his glorious Transfiguration, *vers.* 28. Come we now to the actual Entrance, and Manifestation of this his Glory. And the *Text* sets it out in two particulars :

1. His holy Disposition, and Action, in which he was conversant when he was Transfigured; *As he prayed.*
2. His glorious Transfiguration it self; *The fashion of his countenance was altered, and did shine as the Sun, &c.*

First, His holy Disposition, and Action. In it, two things;

1. Consider it in the absolute Performance, *Quod oravit*; that he Prayed:
2. In the respective Accommodation of it to this Transfiguration; When he prayed, then he was Transfigured.

I. Consider it absolutely; that *Christ* prayed. And the Observation from hence, is thus much; That our blessed Saviour in the days of his flesh, was Religiously conversant in this Duty of Prayer. Many Instances of this in Scripture: And thus he did for divers Reasons:

1. *Ut cultum, & servitium Deo exhiberet*; To do homage, and honour to God his Father. *Christ*, as Man, was inferiour to Him; and so was to perform this recognition of his Father's Sovereignty. Adoration, is due from the most glorious Creatures to God. *All knees must bow to him*; and therefore *Christ*, the first of all the Creatures of God, tenders this homage to him. Prayer, it is our Moral, and Real, and Spiritual Sacrifice, enjoyed us by the Law of Nature, *In recognitionem Universalis & Supremi Domini.*

2. *Christ* was conversant in Prayer, *Ut Orationem exemplo sanciret, & dedicaret*; And so to make it, by his performance, a welcom and acceptable service to him. *Christ* was not sanctified by Prayer, but Prayer was sanctified by *Christ*. As Baptism did not sanctifie him, but he Sanctified and Consecrated it. All God's Ordinances

Serm. II.

Ordinances convey holiness into us in the performance of them; but they drew sanctity from *Christ*. He makes Word, Prayer, Sacraments, the holier for his performing of them. *The Altar Sanctifies the Gift.*

3. *Christ* was conversant in Prayer; That so he might put himself into the exercise of all kind of Graces. He prayed not out of absolute necessity, as we do; but to stir up, and beautify himself with the practice of all kind of Graces. As he said of St. John's Baptism, What though he needed not? *Tet thus it becomes us to fulfill all Righteousness.* The Grace of Prayer is so holy a Grace, the Art of Prayer so Heavenly, that *Christ* would abound in this, as in all other endowments. The Saints they are more plentiful in some gifts, and more scanty in others; but *Christ* was abundant in all.

4. *Christ* was conversant in Prayer; To testify his state of Humiliation. Therefore he prays, not only by way of Compellation, or Intimation, but by way of humble Petition, and Supplication. Thereby acknowledging himself;

1. To be Man.

2. To be in a continual subjection and dependance, from God.

3. That he had put himself into a state of want, and deficiency; and so craves a gracious supply from the hand of God.

5. *Christ* was conversant in Prayer, as a special performance of his Office of Mediator. He is our High-priest; all his Requests are meritorious for us. He was set up for us in the things of God. This is a special excellency in *Christ's* Prayers. The best of our Prayers are but the virtue of Impetration, and the Grace of Acceptation; but *Christ's* Prayers were of a meritorious value. We know, that, besides the great Paschal Sacrifice, the daily Incense was to be offered; so besides *Christ's* Passion, his Prayer was to be tendered for our Redemption.

6. *Christ* was conversant in Prayer for Spiritual Solace, and Consolation. The enjoying of the sweetness of Communication with God, it was to the Spirit of *Christ* above all Comforts. As to Preach, so to Pray, was meat that he fed upon, and Spiritual refreshment. We see when he was wearied with the multitudes, *Matth. 14. He went up to a Mountain to pray*, as the most ravishing refreshment he had. *If any be afflicted*, heavy, sorrowful, thirsting after joy and gladness, let them get into these holy Parleys with God; suck Honey out of this Honey-Comb, it will glad them presently.

Well then;

1. Did *Christ*; the natural Son of God, carefully, and religiously tender up this honour to God? How should we be assiduous in this homage, who are the lowest, and meanest, and unworthiest of his Creatures? He, who in his Deity was equal to God, yet bows, and prostrates himself; how should we humble our selves in this holy Adoration? Do Saints in Heaven, and Angels, nay, did *Christ* himself offer up this Worship? It deeply concerns us to perform it to him.

2. Did *Christ* solicit his Father for supply of Mercies? Why, he had right and title to all: All was his due. How then should we dare to usurp any of God's Blessings, and not beg them by Prayer at his holy hands? Must the Son be a Petitioner, and shall the Servant intermeddle, serve himself in his desires, without craving by Prayer? *Ask of me, and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance, Psal. 2. 8.*

3. Did *Christ* abound in this Grace of Prayer, though freed from all Infirmities, out of the reach of temptations, though full of all Graces? How then should we, who are clogg'd with infirmities, incumbered with temptations, beset with corruptions; How should we abound in this Grace, to draw supply and strength from Heaven?

4. Did *Christ* sue by Prayer? He was most certain of the event of every thing; knew that all things were set and purposed; his own Glory, his Churches Redemption: yet he would Pray. Then, earnest Prayers may be made for those things, whereof there may be fullest assurance. We are told, If Men may be certain of Grace and Glory, why do they pray for it? Certainty on God's part, doth not weaken, but strengthen the force of Prayer. *Isaac* had promise of a Son, yet he

he begged him. *Elijah* was sure of rain, yet he pray'd for it. *David* was sure his House should be established, yet he prayed for it. *Christ* was sure of all, yet he abounds in this service of Prayer. Prayer, it is serviceable to God's Appointments.

II. Consider our Saviour's Prayer here respectively to his glorious Transfiguration; *While he prayed, he was Transfigured*; and so it imports an efficacy in his Prayers, producing and effecting his Transfiguration.

Observe the admirable power and efficacy of devout Prayer; It is able to transport the Soul, to ravish the Spirit, to lift up the Heart into an Heavenly rapture, and to fill Soul and Body with unspeakable glory. A strange Doctrine to our drowzy Petitioners; they never felt any such thing. Well, saith *S. Chrysostom*, *Sancti intelligunt quid dico*. They who abound in this Spiritual exercise, give testimony to this Truth, and find it by experience. Thus *David* professes, that Prayer and Praise, was to him as marrow and fatness. *My mouth shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips*, Psal. 63. 5. *I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed*, Psal. 34. 4, 5.

Now Prayer hath this power;

1. Because it raiseth the Soul into Heaven, far above all earthly vanities, or vexations. The Soul lying groveling upon the Earth, feels many incumbrances; Prayer mounts it above the Clouds. And then, like the Woman in the *Revelation*, if the Moon be under thy Feet, thou shalt be cloathed with the Sun. These lower Regions are dark and tempestuous; get up into Heaven by Prayer, there is nothing but serenity and tranquility. A devout and Heavenly Prayer is like the Altar on *Olympus*, no blast of Wind blows upon it. Say not in thine heart, Who shall go up into Heaven? Prayer will bring thee thither.

2. Prayer will breed those ravishing, and glorious joys, because it brings us into a Communion with the Fountain of Joy and Glory. It opens Heaven to us, gives us approach unto that unaccessable glory. See, *Moses* being in the Mount, in communion with God, his Face was shining and glorious. As a man long conversant in some fragrant place, his very Cloaths will carry those perfumes with him.

3. Prayer shews us the loving, and smiling, and gracious countenance of God; and the sight of that, is of a ravishing efficacy. *In his face is life it self. The light of God's countenance gladdened David more than Oyl, and Wine*, Psal. 4. If he be angry, his frown is the message of Death. Prayer pacifies him, and makes his countenance most amiable. If he turn away his countenance, we wither, our Faces droop: if he shine upon us, we are refreshed. *2 Cor. 3. 18. We all with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*.

4. Prayer brings this rapture of joy, because it brings with it a joyful assurance that our Prayers are accepted. Though our Prayers are not always successful for Impetration, yet seldom but they seal up to us God's Acceptation, and so bring the fruit of sweet Consolation. It lays hold on the Golden Scepter; breeding in us an Heavenly tranquility, Peace of Conscience, joy in the *Holy Ghost*. These secret cheerings, are like the Fire from Heaven that consumed the Sacrifice; and testifie, God is graciously pleased with thy Petitions. What joy like that of *Cornelius*, to have Angels bring tidings of God's Acceptation? *Dan. 5. 10. Fear not Daniel, thy words are heard*. Prayer encourages us, like *Manoah's Wife*, *The Lord hath received a Burnt-Offering, and a Meat-Offering at our hand, he will not kill us*, Judg. 13. 23. Want of this made *Cain's* Countenance fall: This honour'd and encourag'd *Abel*. Oh! those inward cheerings that a Religious Prayer sheds into our Souls; they are not inferiour to the Tydings of Angels.

5. Prayer infuses these glorious joys, because it disburthens our grievances, all of them, into the bosom of God. If it be an ease to a troubled mind, to communicate its sorrow to some faithful friend, how much more comfortable is it, by Prayer to unfold our sorrows into God's Bosom, who pities our griefs, dries

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up our tears? Thus *David*, in his sorrows, parleys with God, and his Soul is refresh'd. See this in *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 18. She was a Woman of a sorrowful Spirit: *Elkanah* could not comfort her: She prays in the bitterness of her Soul, pours out her Soul before the Lord; and see what comfort she finds in Prayer; *Her countenance was no more sad.* See it in *David*, *Psal.* 6. He was in much sickness and sorrow; *Lord rebuke me not in thine ire.* His Soul was vexed, he was weary with groaning, beginning his Prayer with much anguish; but, *vers.* 8. he breaks out into a sudden Joy, *The Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping:* *vers.* 9. *The Lord hath heard my Supplications, the Lord will receive my Prayer.* *Phil.* 4. 6, 7. *In every thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God: And the Peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.*

6. This duty religiously performed, even because it is an holy service, yields presently a sweet satisfaction and contentment to the Conscience: That makes it ever applaud it self, and secretly to say to it self, *I am glad I have done this holy duty.* 1 *Chron.* 29. 9. *The People rejoiced when they offered willingly.* So, at *Solomon's* Sacrifice, the People went home with joy. As every sin leaves a sting after it; so, the duties of Piety and Devotion calm the Soul, and fill it with much joy and glory, even as if they heard an *Euge* from Heaven.

Now that this glorious effect may follow our Prayers, three conditions are required:

1. They must be frequent. To be strange with God, to keep aloof from him, and yet to think that our rare and disused Prayers shall find such success, it is groundless. *Daniel*, who would not abstain thirty days, but thrice every day prayed, he had an Angel to assure him. *Knock, Seek*; they are words of diligence. *Daniel's* thrice, *David's* seven times, these find joy. Thou who art strange to God, canst thou wonder if he be strange to thee; if he impart not those joys that are for his Favourites?

2. They must be cheerful. We must delight in this Communion. God, he delights to hear us pray, *Cant.* 2. 14. *Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.* If he delights to hear our Prayers, how should we delight in offering them to him? They who count it the burthen of their lives to pray, irksom, tedious, can expect little sweetness in this communion. No, *David* is glad to put himself into this Communion, *Psal.* 27. 8. *My heart hath talked of thee, Seek ye my face; Thy face, Lord, will I seek.*

3. They must be fervent. Our remis, feeble, benumbed suits, what force have they to work upon God, or upon our selves? See here our Saviour prays himself into Heaven: In the Garden, prays himself into an Agony. *Paul* praying, was carried up into the third Heaven. *S. Peter* praying, was cast into a trance: *S. John* was ravish'd in Spirit. Zeal, it is the wing of Prayer, the Ladder of Heaven, like *Elijah's* Fiery Chariot. Whereas our cold, slumbering suits, like *Meteors* in the Air, vanish into nothing. Nay, so far are they from Intention and Zeal, that they scarce have any Attention and Mind. Can such cold formalities invite God home into their Heart? They at *Emmaus* were importunate with *Christ*, constrain'd him to stay with them. *Lot* urged the Angels to turn into his House. Use these violences, and thou breakest open Heaven. *David's* heart panted for God. Oh! *When wilt thou come unto me?* Oh! keep this passage open 'twixt God and thee; let no neglect stop or dam it up.

We have seen his disposition, *Oravit, He prayed.* Now follows, Secondly, His glorious Transfiguration. In it, two things;

1. The nature, and condition of it.

2. The reason, and purpose of it.

First, The nature and condition of it. It is called here, an *Alteration*: *S. Matthew* calls it, a *Transfiguration*, or, a *Transformation*. In it, three things:

1. The Alteration it self.

2. The Subject of it: It was,

1. *In vultu*, in his Countenance.
2. *In vestitu*, in his Garments.
3. The Manner: *Shining as the Sun*; that's for his Countenance: *Exceeding white*; that's for his Rayment:
 1. *Ut Nix, As Snow*:
 2. *Ut Lux, as the Light*:
 3. *Whiter than any Fuller on Earth can white them*.

I. For the Alteration it self; *He was Transfigured*. That implies two things:

1. It was *Passiva mutatio*; A passive Alteration: *Non Transfiguravit se, sed Transfiguratus est*; He did not Transfigure himself, but he was Transfigured:

1. Because his Humanity was only patient, and receptive, in this glorious Alteration; had no activity to infuse this Glory. That was but as a Lanthorn, which gives not light of it self; a Candle within it must shine, and enlighten it.
2. To intimate, that it was the Action of God the Father, putting Honour and Glory upon his Son; and not so much the Action of the Son, assuming Glory to himself: *Father, Glorifie thy Son, that thy Son may Glorifie thee*. The Merits were the Son's; the Rewards, his Fathers.

2. It was *Qualitativa mutatio*; A Transfiguration; a glorious Alteration in the appearance, and qualities of his Body, not a substantial Alteration in the substance of it. *Assumpsit gloriam, non deposuit naturam. Hieron.*

And from it gather these Corollaries;

1. *Hæc fides nostra*; It is a rule for our Faith. It was the same Body of Christ, in Nature and Substance, *before*, and *in*, and *after* Glorification. *Ubiquitaries*, and so *Papists*, make Christ's Glorification not to consist in investing of his body with glorious qualities, but in the abolishing, or turning his Flesh into his Deity. No, Christ's Body here, and in Heaven, is not changed in the natural proportion, but enriched, and beautified with Heavenly endowments. His nature is not abolish'd, but only replenish'd with Glory. Glory freed him from natural infirmities, it doth not strip him of natural properties. Still, *eadem quantitas. Ubiquitaries*, say, by virtue of Union, and Glorification, it must be every where; *Papists* say, by virtue of Glorification, it may be any where, in a thousand places at once. Thus in the Sacrament they have built him a Tabernacle of accidents and shadows. No; Glory, as Grace, perfects Nature; it doth not destroy it. It is a qualitative, not a substantial alteration.

2. *Hæc gloria nostra*. It was a qualitative alteration, his Body remaining the same; this is our Glory. Our Flesh is glorified in Christ, and he communicates to it a glorious condition. This is the advancement of our Bodies. He assumed our Body, not only for Passion, but for Glorification. Fond Hereticks say, he left this Body behind him; No, he hath united it undividedly to him, dedicated it to himself to glory. *Securæ estote caro & sanguis, occupâstis cælum in Christo. Hieron.*

3. *Hæc spes nostra*: This is our hope, that these our frail, earthly bodies shall be in his good time transfigured, and made like his glorious Body. *Anabaptists* dream of new bodies to be made. No; what he hath shewed me in his own, he can, and will perform in ours. *Our vile bodies shall be made like his glorious body*. His glorified body was *primitiæ*, the First-fruits, and they are pledges of the whole Crop.

So much for the first, the kind or nature of this alteration. Now,

II. For the Subject of it.

1. It is *Corpus*, not *Anima*; his Body, not his Soul; this was not enriched with any new encrease of Glory, but his Body only. The Soul, by virtue of the Hypostatical Union, was replenished with all Grace and Glory from his Conception. Then he was anointed with the Oyl of gladness. He was *comprehensor quoad animam ab instanti*, but he was *viator in corpore*, that was in a state of infirmity, and so capable of increase of Glory. Addition of Glory to his Soul,

1. It was needless.

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2. It was useless. This Transfiguration was purposed for the good, and profit of the Apostles, and so to be such as was observable by them.

2. It was *Vultus*; his Face or Countenance. No question, all his Body was clothed with Majesty, but his Countenance was most Resplendent. That is *sedes maiestatis*. What the natural Beauty of our Saviour's Countenance was, some curiously enquire, and accordingly resolve it to be beyond all others, even beyond *Adam's* in Paradise: But as *Moses* veiled his Face, so the Scripture hath put a Vail of silence and concealment upon this of *Christ*. It is best to resolve; the habit of his Body, as it was utterly free from the least blemish, and deformity, so was it also fitted and tempered to his state of Humiliation, and infirmity.

3. It was *vestitus*; his Garments: that's the other Subject of this alteration. And then follows;

III. The manner :

1. His Countenance, that was *shining as the Sun*. Not but that *Christ's* glorified Body doth now surpass all created Glory; all Excellencies cannot equalize his Majesty. But,

1. This is the most glorious Creature, to which we may resemble it.

2. This Transfiguration was not a full representation of his Heavenly Glory, but only a glimpse of it. *Non erat plenitudo gloriæ, sed similitudo*. Had this *Sun of Righteousness* shined in his full Glory, the Eyes of the Apostles could not have beheld it. *He dwells in that Light, that no Eye can approach unto*.

Now from this resemblance of *Christ's* Glory, as the Sun; deduce it into these particulars.

1. *Sol*, it is *origo lucis*; all Light flows from the Sun, and is derived from it. The Stars shine by a borrowed light. So *Christ*, he is the original and *Fons gloriæ*, the Fountain of Glory. All his Saints, and Angels are opaque dark in themselves; their light it is from him. He is *Fons gratiæ & gloriæ*, as the King is *Fons honoris*. From his fulness they receive all; he cloaths them with Light; if he hide his Face, they are eclipsed.

2. *Solis splendor*, it is *purissimus*; the Light of the Sun, it is most refulgent. The Moon is waterish, the Stars glimmering; but the Sun is more pure. So *Christ*, he is not only pure, but Purity it self. No mixture, or shadow of darkness, or corruption is in him. There are *macule in Luna, sic in Ecclesia*; spots in the Moon, and so there are in the Church. *The Stars are impure in his sight. Cujus participatione, sumus iusti, ejus comparatione sumus iniusti*.

3. *Solis splendor*, 'tis *vegetans*; the light of the Sun it enlivens, and quickens, and gives vivacity to all Creatures. Philosophers say, without the influence of the Sun, no Creature can live; This being eclipsed, all things languish. In its departure there is nothing but fading and dying; in its return it gives vivacity. So *Christ*, he is the Fountain of spiritual and glorious life. A gracious aspect from him, enlivens us, as it did *S. Peter*; *Malach. 4. 2. The Sun of righteousness comes with healing in his Wings; and ye shall go forth and grow as the Calves of the stall*.

4. *Solis splendor*, it is *lætificans*; the light of the Sun it is cheering and comforting. *It is a good thing to see the Sun*; darkness is sad, and irksome. So *Christ* refreshes and glads the Soul, *Psal. 4. 7. the light of his Countenance puts gladness in my Heart, more than in the time that their Corn and their Wine increased*. The Church in Persecution therefore prays, *Psal. 80. 7. Cause thy Face to shine, and we shall be saved*.

We have seen his Countenance, *shining as the Sun*;

See,

2. His Garments; these are shining, and glorious. And it is expressed three ways;

1. *White as the Light*, *Matth. 17. 2.*

2. *Exceeding white as Snow*, *Mark 9. 3.*

3. By transcendency, so as no Fuller upon Earth can white them; exceeding Art, which is inferior to Nature; nay, surpassing Nature.

Here

Here are two Queries that may be put ;

1. Why are his Garments glorious ? A glorified Body shall have no other Garments than the Robes of Immortality, and glory. True : but *Christ* was,

1. Not in *statu gloriæ*, but only in *actu*, in a transient passage of Glory.

2. Not in the fulness of Glory, but in some resemblance. In Heaven he cloaths himself with *Light as with a Garment*, now he cloaths himself with Garments as with *Light*.

3. Not *inter glorificatos*, and so habituates his Body to the decency of Humane Conversation. How irreligious are some of those disputes which the Jesuites have concerning the Body of *Christ* ?

2. Whence arose this Glory of his Garments ? From the Glory, and Resplendency that was in his Body. His Divinity, that convey'd Glory into his Soul ; and that transfused it into his Body ; and that transmits it into his Garments : As his power of Miracles was originally in his God-head, then in his Soul, then in his Body, then in his Garment. The hem of his Garment had Virtue in it, being *instrumentum conjunctum*.

Now from the Glory of his Garments, as *Snow*, as *Light*;

1. Gather what model we must gather of *Christ's* Glory, and our Glory with him. Look upon all the Beauties that are in the World, the most glorious, and resplendent Creatures, and unite all their excellencies, and raise up thy thoughts by them, and from them, to the contemplation of that Glory which is in Heaven. View the curious rarities of Art, and Nature. Is the *Snow*, a vanishing Meteor, so white ? The material Heavens so pure ? The Lilly so beautiful ? Oh ! Our *Solomon* in his Glory is cloath'd more richly than any of these. Eye hath not seen, Ear hath not heard, the Heart cannot conceive the Greatness of his Glory.

2. Consider, *Qualis sanctitas Christi, & Sanctorum*. How great is that glorious purity which is in *Christ*, and which can stand before him ? It must be exact, and pure without all stain and blemish. Glory is nothing but, *Excellens Sanctitas*. Our white Robes, are the righteousness of the Saints. *David* prays to be *whiter than Snow*. How should we buy of him fine Linen and pure, and wash our Robes in the Blood of the Lamb ? The Papists they have their Fulling-Mills, Purgatory, Penance. No : those are all polluted. It must be *Christ*, who must come with Fullers Sope, *Malath*.

3. Consider, are his Garments thus glorious ? How holy and glorious shall his Members be ? It is he that puts his own comeliness upon them. See how he commends the several lineaments of his Church in the *Canticles* ; her Eyes, her Lips, her Nose, &c. If these outward applications of Garments derive such Beauty and Glory from him, how then shall not those near intimate, Spiritual Unions ? As *St. Paul* speaks ; *Upon our less honourable members, we put more honour*.

So much of the Nature, and Condition of his Transfiguration ; See now, *Secondly*, The ground and reason why he was transfigured before them.

1. *Christ* puts himself into this appearance of Glory, to testify and demonstrate the truth of his Divinity. His Humanity did appear unto them ; now his Glory gives evidence of his Divine Nature.

2. But how can this Glory of his Face prove his Divinity, seeing *Moses* his Face did shine ?

A. *Christ's* Glory came not from a gracious dispensation, but from a substantial bodily inhabitation of the God-head ; but *Moses* his shining was far inferior :

1. He had it *extrinsecè*, by conferring with God ; as a Mud-wall when the Sun shines upon it : but *Christ's* Glory came from within, from his Deity to his Soul.

2. *Moses* his shining was not in such Glory : that was concealed and hid by the covering of a Vail ; *Christ's* darts through his Garments. His shinings were *radii divinitatis*, *Damasc*. *Moses* had *splendorem sub velamento* ; *Christ* had *velamen in splendore*.

3. *Moses* his shining was terrible, *Christ's* was comfortable : The Apostles were loth to lose the sight of it.

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2. *Christ* was Transfigured to prefigure the glory of his second coming at the day of Judgment. Then he will have his Saints about him, as *Moses*, and *Elias*, and his Apostles, to be present with him; and he himself will be in his Glory; His first coming was in infirmity, but the Kingdom of God shall come with Power. Look upon Mount *Tabor*, and then believe the Glory of his second Appearance.

3. *Christ* was Transfigured, *consignare Resurrectionem*. It shews the possibility, nay the facility of his own and our Resurrection. He who can transform himself thus into Glory, how easily can he raise up himself, and us also, and translate us into Glory? Look upon Mount *Tabor*, and then doubt not but Mount *Golgotha* shall give up her dead.

4. *Christ* was Transfigured, *armare contra scandalum crucis*. He had told his Disciples of his Cross, and Sufferings. It grieved and troubled them. Now to remove this scandal of his Cross, he arrays himself in Glory. This Face that shall be spit upon, I can make it as the Sun; this Body that is to be tortured, shall shine as the Light; these Garments that are to be parted, shall be made resplendent. Look to Mount *Tabor*, and be not offended at Mount *Calvary*.

5. He shews himself in Glory to his Apostles, gives them a glimpse of Heaven, to quicken up their Appetites to the longing for it. These *præludia* of Heaven, will support any drooping Spirit. As *Jonathan*, the taste of Honey revived him presently. As *Caleb* cut down a bunch of Grapes from *Eschol*, and by the presenting of that, encouraged the People to desire *Canaan*. Fix thy Meditations upon these Glories; behold, by Faith, *Christ* in his Glory; not attended only with *Moses*, and *Elias*, but with innumerable Angels; behold thy Throne, thy Crown, thy white Robes, it will make thee courageous, and desirous to be dissolved.



O N

The Transfiguration.

The Third Sermon.

S. Luke IX. 30, 31.

And behold, there talked with him two Men, which were *Moses* and *Elias*;

Who appeared in Glory, and spake of his Decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.



OW follows *Christ's* honourable Attendance, that accompanied him in his glorious Transfiguration. And in it observe three particulars:

1. The Persons who are present.
2. The Manner of their presence; *They appeared in Glory*.
3. Their Action and Employment; An Holy and Heavenly Conference; *They spake of his decease*.

First, The Persons that attended, and were present at his Transfiguration: And they present themselves in three considerable notions;

1. Their number; *Two*.
2. Their kind; *Two Men*.
3. Their specialty; *Moses* and *Elias*.

I. Their

I. Their number, *Two*,

Why so small a number of glorious Attendants? He could have commanded twelve Legions. All the Assembly of the Saints were ambitious of this Honour; Heaven would have emptied it self upon this Mountain, to celebrate this glorious Transfiguration of *Christ*.

Yet but *two* admitted;

1. This Transfiguration of *Christ* was but a glimpse of his Glory, no full manifestation. He shews here but one Beam of his Majesty, not the full lustre and splendor of it. When he comes in full Glory, Troops, and Millions of Saints and Angels shall wait upon him. Now he more privately discovers himself; in the view of a few: and if he be now so glorious, how resplendent will he be in all his Saints, and holy Angels?

2. These Saints present, are not present for attendance only, but as Witnesses, to give testimony to the Son of God. And two Witnesses of such choice and note, of so great authority, to seal and assure us of *Christ's* glorious Divinity, are sufficient. *At the mouth of two Witnesses, or, at the mouth of three Witnesses, shall a matter be established, Deut. 19. 15.* There need no more. Here therefore only three from Earth are assumed to this Vision, and two only from Heaven. Hereafter, *Every Eye shall see him*; Now the sight of him is more reserved and mystical, and of a more reserved dispensation.

3. Two Saints are assumed into attendance of this Glory, others are omitted; to shew and figure out a disparity and diversity of Glory in those blessed Spirits: all the Saints have their portion of bliss, but in their proportion not in a just equality. As from Earth he hath his favourites, three choice Apostles, the rest stood at a more remote distance; so in Heaven, though all are happy, yet have they their measures, and degrees of Glory. These *two* in the Text are taken into a greater nearness, admitted to a more full view of *Christ*; others were waiting his coming into Heaven, longing for, and expecting his glorious Ascension. These had the favour of seeing him before in the days of their Flesh: *Moses* and *Elias* saw his back-parts: These again are dignified with this glorious Apparition; assumed with him into his triumphant Chariot, as *John* did assume *Jonadab*.

That is the first, their number, *two*.

II. Their kind, *two men*. Why was he not attended with glorious Angels? Why were not these commanded to wait upon him, and worship him? No, he assumes not Angels, but these holy Men.

1. They were, *magis idonei Testes*, more competent and convenient Witnesses of his Deity and Mediatorship, than the choicest Angels. *Moses* and *Elias* should be of more prevailing Authority, than the Angels. These had Authority of teaching in the Church. And they bear record here, in relation to what they were before, with respect to the Scriptures, of which they were the Pen-men, and Teachers. This is a great assurance of Truth, that those Saints who first published the tidings of Salvation, are now Eye-witnesses; feel, and find the truth of what they Preached. *Remember them who have spoken to you the word of God, whose Faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Heb. 13. 7.* That Doctrine which they taught, brought them to Glory.

2. *Duo homines, Two Men*; they attend this Glory of *Christ*, because they are more concerned in *Christ's* Incarnation, and Mediatorship. These are not only Spectators, but Partners. Our Salvation, and Bliss, is the main aim of *Christ*; the Glory of the Angels is less Principal, and accessary. *He took not upon him their Nature*; fulfilled not their Covenant. *To us he was born*; to us he lived; for us he died. They are not the Spouse, but the friends of the Spouse. The Church is *Christ's* Spouse; they, like *St. John the Baptist*, rejoyce at the sight of it. As when God led the *Israelites* into Canaan, a mixed people followed them, and entred in with them: so we are the choice People, who are led into Heaven, Angels are but Inmates in Heaven, in respect of us. And Heaven is said to be prepared for us, not for Angels. *Mat. 25. Hell is prepared for the Devil and his Angels*: but

not

Ser. III. not so Heaven; this is not prepared for the Angels, but for you. The joys of Heaven are called, *A sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, not with Angels, in the Kingdom of Heaven. They are but *Pocillatores*, but Servitors and Attendants upon our Glory.

3. It is more comfort to the Apostles, to see Men in Glory with *Christ*, rather than Angels. Angels in Heaven were *ab origine* there, never excluded; but to see Men assumed, this shews that the Virtue of our Mediator hath opened Paradise again, quenched the Fiery Sword, reconciled us, and given entrance for our banished Nature into the state of Glory. It was comfort for the Captive-Jews, to see *Daniel* and his Fellows advanced by the King of *Babel*, and made Chief in the Kingdom; for to see *Hester* made Queen, and *Vashti* neglected: So, to see Flesh of our Flesh, Men in the same Captivity and Condemnation, reconciled, glorified; it bids us hope well for a gracious admission.

That's the second, their kind, *Two Men*.

III. Their specialty; their Persons, *Moses* and *Elias*. Why not some other Saints, but these must be singled out? What Reasons are there for their appearance, rather than for others? Divers Reasons may be given; reduce them to these four Heads:

1. Some Reasons of this Choice, are in respect of *Christ*.
2. Some, in respect of themselves.
3. Some, in respect of the Apostles.
4. Some, in respect of the People to whom it was to be published.

1. *Moses* and *Elias* appear at this Transfiguration, *respectu Christi*, in respect of *Christ*:

1. *Famulantur, ut Domino*. These chief, eminent Saints, must do Homage to *Christ*, as to their Great Lord. It added to *Mordecai's* Honour, that *Haman* the Chief Prince must attend his Triumph. See here, the two grand Pillars of the Church, the most renowned Prophets, Saints high in Heaven, wait upon our Saviour. *He calls for Elias, see if Elias will come*, said they scoffingly. Behold, *Elias* and *Moses* are present; all their Dignity must stoop to him. *Moses* was faithful as a Servant of the House; but *Christ* was Lord of the House. Kings, and Prophets, and eminent Saints fall down before him; as *Joseph's* Brethren, all honour him; all Sheaves bow down to this Sheaf; all the Stars worship this Sun of Righteousness.

2. *Attestantur, ut Messia*. They come and give evidence, and testimony, that he is the anointed *Messias*, that was promised to the Church. He receives testimony and witness from *Moses* and the Prophets. Thus *Philip*, Joh. 1. 45. *We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth*. Thus *S. Peter* brings *Moses* to witness; *For Moses truly said unto the Fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you*, Act. 3. 22. *To him give all the Prophets witness*, Act. 10. 43. And *Christ* accounts that *Moses* wrote of him, *Search the Scriptures, — they are they which testify of me*, Joh. 5. 39. This they foretold; now, being exhibited, they set to their Seals of this glorious Performance.

3. *Sociantur, ut Legis & Prophetarum complementa*. *Moses* and *Elias* attend, and behold him, as the fulfilling and accomplishment of Law and Prophets; to intimate, that Law and Prophets all aim at him, and all concur and joyn in him; all, like Lines, run to this Center. All the Patriarchs were Types of him; all the Priests and Prophets were Representations of him; all their Rites and Ceremonies prefigured him; all their Saviours and Deliverers were his Fore-runners. They were but Shadows; he, in coming, gave truth and fulness to them. It was sorrow to *Jonas*, that his Prophecy was frustrate; it was joy to the Prophets to see all their Predictions made good in him. To prefigure thee, saith *Moses*, I instituted the Passover, and effusion of Blood; all my Rites and Ceremonies look'd at thee. To foretel thee, saith *Elias*, was my Message and Ministry. All the Prophets from *Samuel*, and after, pointed at him. Till his coming, all things were empty and imperfect; now they all clasp and close about him, as their drift and argument. *He is Amen*.

1. *Venerantur, ut Servatorem*: They appear, to adore him as their Saviour and Redeemer. Though they are already in Heaven and Glory, yet they know to whose Blood they owe it, who gave them entrance and access. *Moses* himself could not convey himself into *Canaan*, the Type of Heaven; much less into Heaven it self. All the Elders and Saints fling down their Crowns at his feet; all worship, and are tributary to his Glory. *Elias* his Chariot was of *Christ's* sending, as *Jacob's* came from *Joseph*.

2. *Moses* and *Elias* appear, in respect of Themselves; for these Reasons:

1. Conceive them, *ut eminentes Sancti*. *Moses* and *Elias* were Persons of admirable holiness, yet they attend and adore our Saviour. Not onely wicked and profane men stand in need of him, and acknowledge him; but the holiest men, and most abundant in Righteousness, own him for their Redeemer. As *S. Ambrose* speaks; For Publicans and Harlots to be justified by Faith, is no such wonder: but for *Abraham*, so rich in Good-works, yet to stand in need of Faith and *Christ*, it highly advanceth the Glory of *Christ*. The purest Robe must be washed in this Blood, the choicest Saint must draw Grace from *Christ*. *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, was a Son of this Adoption of Grace.

2. Conceive them, *ut Sancti mortui, & translati*. They were Saints out of this Life. *Moses* is dead, *Elias* translated; yet they do homage to *Christ*, to teach us, that he is Lord of quick and dead. While he is upon Earth, yet is he Lord of the Spirits in Heaven: Now he is in Heaven, he is Lord of all on Earth. All live to him: He is the God of *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*. No state of time, or place, or condition, excludes his Sovereignty. All Knees in Heaven, and Earth, and under the Earth, must bow, and prostrate to him. The Pope, who enlargeth his Power to the World of Spirits, yet claims not that Authority: He hath not *Jurisdictionem*, but *per modum Suffragit*. *Christ* hath an homage of Saints that are dead and translated: He is Lord of all; quick and dead must do him service.

3. Conceive them *ut Sancti Veteris Testamenti*: They were not living under the Gospel, but under the Old Testament; yet they acknowledge they belong as dependants upon this *Messias*. He had an influence backwards to those former Saints, as well as forward to the times of Christians. They who went before, and they who came after, all sing *Hosanna* to this Son of David. The Church of the Patriarchs acknowledged him for their Head. All of them were partakers of this common Salvation. *Christ Jesus*, yesterday, to day, the same for ever. It was a dangerous, and blasphemous Error of the *Manichees*, and *Marcionites*, to distinguish the God of the Old Testament from the God of the New. They counted them a Carnal People, feeding only upon Earthly Promises; No, their estate was Spiritual, and the Promise Heavenly, and all partakers of one glorious *Messias*.

4. Conceive them, *ut Assessores Judicii*. This Transfiguration is a representation of his last coming in Glory. Then these Saints *Moses* and *Elias* shall assist his Judgment. The Law and the Gospel shall then appear against their contemners, and give in evidence against prophane sinners. Oh! we think to see *Christ* only all in mercy. No; know, *Moses* will appear, and his Law shall be charged upon thee, and the Doctrine of the Prophets. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even *Moses*, in whom ye trust, *Joh. 5. 45*. That Law of Holiness is not abolished, but is in full strength yet, till *Christ* shall forgive it thee. *Moses* grew not weak, or sickly, but continued in full vigour, till God buried him; so the Law hath an eternal obligation, and force upon thee, and will accuse thee, till *Christ* discharge it. As many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law, *Rom. 2. 12*.

3. These two, *Moses* and *Elias*, appear respectively to the Apostles, who were now present at this Transfiguration, for three reasons;

1. To correct an error in them. They dreamed of *Christ's* Kingdom to be Earthly and Temporal. The appearance of these Citizens shews the nature of this Kingdom. Heavenly Citizens must have an Heavenly King. Should *Christ* reign here, what would become of *Moses* and *Elias*, the Saints departed? They

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are banish'd from this Kingdom. No, sure they must sit down with *Abraham* in that Kingdom. *Ye are come unto the Heavenly Jerusalem,—and to the Spirits of just men, Heb. 12. 22, 23.* The consideration of these Citizens, must raise us to the acknowledgment of an Heavenly Inheritance. *They sought a City to come.*

2. To confirm a truth. They had made a noble Confession of *Christ's* Divinity. See how *Christ* confirms them now, by the acknowledgment here of two glorious Witnesses. As *Christ* to *Nathaniel*; *Believest thou, because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the Fig-tree? Thou shalt see greater things than these.—Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the Angels of God ascending, and descending upon the Son of man, Joh. 1. 50, 51.* They shall have *Moses* and *Elias*, two great Witnesses, to confirm it to them. Thus God honours and rewards, and confirms the Faith of his Servants.

3. To enforce a duty, *Moses* and *Elias* assist him in Glory. These were the most laborious and faithful Servants of *Christ*; and how are they now honoured? It urgeth upon them that holy imitation. *Moses*, he was Faithful in the House of God; *Elias*, he was Zealous, and Jealous for his Glory. Both ventured their lives in God's Cause. *Moses* encountred *Pharaoh*; *Elias*, *Abab*: Both Zealous in God's Worship; now they appear in rest and Glory. These great Zealots were most eminent Favourites. It chalks out to the Apostles the way of getting high into Heaven. Those who labour and toil in this work, burn in Zeal for his Glory, pledge their Lives in his Cause, give up the fullest account, and improvement of their pains, these are his choice ones; these follow the Lamb where ever he goes. As *David's* Worthies, they were always about him, placed in greatest command, stand upon Record; so here, these who encountred Giants, *Pharaoh*, *Abab*, *Jezabel*, these are they who are highly honoured.

4. These two appear respectively to the People, and their Judgment of *Christ*. There were three opinions common among the *Jews*, of *Christ*;

1. A blasphemous opinion.
2. A more moderate opinion, but yet unworthy of him.
3. A partial and superstitious opinion.

All these are corrected by this Apparition.

1. They had a blasphemous opinion of him, that he was an Impostor, a transgressor of the Law, a Blasphemer; *This man blasphemeth, Matth. 9. 3.* See here, *Moses* and *Elias* justify him, bear witness to him, associate and protest their Communion with him. Had he been a transgressor, a Profaner of the Sabbath, *Moses* would not have owned him, much less honoured him. Had he been a Blasphemer, as they charged him, *Elias*, who burnt in Zeal for God's Glory, would he have adored him? Now then that these Saints, of such authority among the People, do they acknowledge him? Surely he is no Transgressor, no Blasphemer.

2. The People more moderately, yet most unworthily, judged him to be but some Prophet. *Whom do men say, that I, the Son of man, am? Some say, that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets, Matth. 16. 13, 14.* That was the best they thought of him; *A great Prophet is risen up among us, Luc. 7. 16.* This was well; but yet too low for *Christ*. The Devil can be content we should yied him thus much, if we stay there. The *Turks* attribute so much to him. No, here we see the main Prophet *Elias*, he adores him as Lord of the Prophets, to whom all Prophets ministered, ushered in, foretold. All the Prophets were enlightned by him, and were sent by him. *Elias*, and *Samuel*, and all, stoop to him.

3. The *Jews* had a superstitious opinion of *Moses*, that none could exceed him. They would not allow *Christ* to be *Moses's* equal. *Thou art his Disciple, but we are Moses Disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not whence he is, Joh. 9. 28, 29.* See here, *Moses* whom they dote upon, he gives precedency to *Christ*; he vails, and bows, and prostrates to him. Thus the *Jews* superstitiously advance some Saints to prejudice *Christ*. *Abraham*; *Art thou greater than our Father Abraham, which is dead? and the Prophets are dead, whom makest thou thy self? Joh. 8. 53.* Whereas *Abraham* desired to see

one day of *Christ*; so did *Moses*. Many Prophets and Kings have desired to see *those things which you see*, Luk. 10. 24. that is, *Christ* in the flesh. As S. Paul of himself, *What is Paul, what is Apollos?* So, what is *Moses* in compare, with *Christ*? Ser. III.

So much of the Persons;

1. *Duo*; *Two*.

2. *Duo homines*; *Two men*.

3. *Hi duo*; These two, *Moses* and *Elias*. Next is,

Secondly, The Manner of their presence, *They appeared in Glory*. In it two things;

1. It is a real Appearance.

2. It is a glorious Appearance.

I. It is a real Appearance; not an apparition of fancy, or some Vision to the mind, but a true, real, personal Appearance of these two Saints.

1. It is propounded, and sealed up with a word of certainty, and assurance, *Behold*; importing not only admiration, but evidence and assurance.

2. The eyes of the Apostles give evidence of this Appearance. It is said, *When they were awake, they saw his Glory, and the two men that stood with him*: And St. Peter, and St. John affirm they were eye-witnesses of all this Glory.

3. The Actions ascribed to these men are real and bodily; *talking, speaking*, all bodily performances.

4. It is not suitable to the Glory, and Truth of *Christ*, to delude men with shadows, and empty Appearances. He was most real, as of himself; *handle me, feel me*. All these are evidences for a real Appearance.

Now this reality of Appearance, assures us of two Truths:

1. Is *Veritas Immortalitatis*; the truth of the Immortality of Souls and Spirits; The spirits of these two holy men, are living and immortal. It is a wicked opinion of the *Sadduces*, now reigning among the *Jews*, that the Souls are extinguished with the bodies. Here is not only *Elias*, whom they rejected; but *Moses*, whom they believed, is here really exhibited. This is the assurance of our Faith; *Te are come to the Spirits of just men made perfect*. This is a foundation of Religion. If no Immortality hereafter, no Piety here. How carnally drunk do many live, as if there were no Soul, or no Immortality?

4. Is *Veritas*, the truth, nay more, *facilitas Resurrectionis*, the easiness of the Resurrection. *Elias*, indeed, in body was translated; but *Moses* was dead, and buried in the plain of *Moab*; yet here his body is united to his soul, and appears in Glory. How easily can the Lord of our Bodies and Souls, raise, and place our bodies in Glory? See, he beckons *Elias* out of Heaven, *Moses* out of his grave. *Moses* his body was not as *Lazarus's*, *four days*, but two thousand years in the grave, yet at the *nutus* of *Christ*, it is raised, and united. Our Bodies and Souls shall be in his hands, not only for safety, and custody; but for guidance and disposal. Speak but the word, Lord, and thy Servants shall revive.

That's the first; a real Appearance.

II. It is a glorious Appearance; *Appear'd in Glory*. *Moses* and *Elias*, being Attendants upon *Christ*, appear in Glory, as Noblemen appear in greatest Magnificence to attend the King.

1. Here is the glory of the Saints, to attend *Christ* in Glory. The *Jews* thought if *Christ* were advanced, *Moses* must down. Whosoever preached *Christ*, spake against *Moses*. No, *Moses* was never so glorious, as in this Attendance. It is otherwise with this Sun of righteousness, and the Saints; than with the body of the Sun and the Stars. These do, *occidere heliace*, not appear when they come nearer to the Sun: but our Sun of Glory makes these Stars, the nearer they be, to be the more glorious. As in *Joseph's* dream, the Sun, Moon, and Stars were all shining together.

2. *Moses* and *Elias* appear gloriously in *Christ's* presence. *Moses* is then made manifest and clear, when *Christ* comes. Take *Moses* asunder, and without *Christ*,

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1. He is obscure; there is no lustre, no clearness, he is under a vail; but *Christ*, he with his Coming, if he appear with *Moses*, he makes all gloriously clear and evident to us.
2. He is imperfect, nothing but emptiness, and shadows; *Christ* gives a fullness to *Moses*; He is not so much the abolition, as the consummation of the Law; *Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ*. *Paul* calls them beggarly rudiments, void of *Christ*.
3. *Moses* apart from *Christ*, he is fearful, and terrible: *The Law causeth wrath*. Ay, but look upon *Moses* standing with *Christ*, then he is comfortable. Make *Moses* a Servant to *Christ*; the Law, to Faith; and never look upon *Moses*, but see *Christ* with him, and above him; and that will rejoice thee.

That's the second, the manner of their appearance in Glory.

Thirdly, See their Action, and Employment, *They talked with him*. In it three things;

1. The Action, *Collocuti*.
2. The Person, *Cum Christo*.
3. The Matter, *De exitu*.

I. The Action, *Collocuti*; They talked. It was no dumb shew, and representation to gaze upon; but an holy and heavenly Communication. *Moses* and *Elias*, if they appear, they appear as Prophets, speaking, and conferring; either speaking of God, or to God. It is the life of a Prophet in Heaven; day and night, without ceasing, there is nothing but speaking. We have here too, *Moses* and the Prophets, let us confer with them and *Christ*, it is a glimpse of Glory. In the Scriptures, we find *Moses* and the Prophets conferring with *Christ*, which *S. Peter* prefers before this Vision, and calls, *2 Pet. 1. 19. A more sure word of Prophecy*.

Now this *Colloquium*, this speaking, implies two things:

1. *Consensum*.
2. *Familiaritatem*.

I. *Consensum*. It teaches us, That there is a sweet agreement betwixt *Moses* and *Elias*, with our Saviour *Christ*; that there is no repugnancy or contradiction 'twixt the Old and New Testament, but a sweet harmony and agreement. Here, the Law and the Prophets, like the two Cherubs, are both compassing, and looking upon the Mercy Seat. This *Christ* taught his Disciples, *All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me*, *Luk. 24. 44*. There were certain Hereticks in *S. Aug.* time, who professed themselves Enemies to the Law, and the Prophets. But, *Non potes segregare Legem ab Evangelio, ut nec umbram à corpore*. The Lord thy God will raise unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, saith *Moses*, *Deut. 18. 15*. Like unto me, not contrary to me. The same Religion, the same substantial Truth, the same Grace and Salvation is in both Testaments. There is a variety of Ceremonies, but the same Truth and Substance; there is the same Author of both. Thus *S. James* answers this doubt, *Known to the Lord are all his works from the beginning*; it is no change in God. As the precepts of the Physician, are some of one kind to day, to morrow of another, both aiming at the health of the Patient; *Aug.* The Gospel was comprehended in the Law, the Law is explained, and cleared in the Gospel. The Law shews *Moses* veiled, the Gospel unveils him.

2. *Denotat familiaritatem*. Their talk and conference betokeneth a sweet and holy familiarity, and Communion with God on Earth. As of *Moses* it was said, *The Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend*, *Exod. 33. 11*.

Observe, *Moses* and *Elias* were men of much communion with God upon Earth; many Heavenly entercourses passed between them; and now they are admitted into a near, and sweet, and familiar communication. Men of communion with God here, shall be received with more free access and familiar conversation with *Christ* in Heaven. They who never maintain speech with God here, how can they

they look to have access in Heaven? They who love to come into his presence, delight in hearing him speak to them, and they to him by Prayer and Meditation, they shall have nearest, and freest, and sweetest communion hereafter. That's the first; the Action, *Collocuti sunt, They talked.*

II. The Person, *Cum Christo, With Christ*; not with the Apostles, nor the Apostles with them. Here was a miraculous Apparition; but no parley, nor intercourse.

Observe, Here is no shew, or appearance of any intercourse 'twixt Christians on Earth, and the Saints in Heaven; no invocation, or salutation on the Apostles part; no revelation, or instruction on these Prophets part. The Lord hath purposely estranged us from all intercourse, 'twixt us and the Spirits departed. There is no need of *Moses and Elias*, to speak from Heaven; we have *Moses and Elias*, and all that they can say, behoveful for us, in their Books and Writings. *Ye are come to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, Heb. 12. 23, 24.* He is the only Mediator.

III. The Matter of this Conference, *His decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.* Had some the reporting of this Conference, it should have been of some other matters. May be, of the Succession of Times and Kingdoms; of the rising and falling of Monarchies. These the Prophets were acquainted with; but these they talk not of. Others would have reported some Seraphical discourse of the nine Orders of Angels, and those Hierarchies; or some great discourse of *Limbus Patrum*, or of the Souls in Purgatory. No such matter; it is here, *De morte Christi, of Christ's decease.* But,

1. Why do they confer about this?

2. How do they talk of it?

1. Why do they confer about the Death of Christ?

1. This is the grand, necessary, fundamental work of Christ for his Church. If such a Synod as this meet, it is not for trifles; but they talk of the common Salvation of the Church. That is the Capital Truth, the ground-work of all our Faith, and Salvation. This takes up their discourse. Nay, it is the Meditation of God; His ancient thought from Eternity was busied about this, That Christ should die for our Redemption.

2. This they talked of, as a thing that was a great grief, and offence to the Apostles. A little before, Peter abhorred to hear of Christ's Death. It bred in them,

1. *Scandalum tristitiæ*; They were very sad.

2. *Scandalum dubitationis*; It troubled their Faith, how the Messiah should suffer; *We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel, Luke 24. 2.* but he is dead.

Purposely Christ and these Saints confer about this, to acquaint the Apostles with this Mystery, that so it must be; and that our Salvation depended upon it.

3. This they talked of, as the thing that both Law and Prophets prefigured, and foretold. All their Sacrifices were Representations of his Death; all their Prophecies, Predictions of it: *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, Luke 24. 46.* In this sense, *He was the Lamb slain from the beginning of the World.*

4. This they talked of, as the matter of Christ's greatest Glory and Renown. They being to adore Christ, and to put honour upon him, they invest him with his Garments dipp'd in Blood. *Isa. 63. 1. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed Garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save?* What honour like this, to die for his Church, to be the Sacrifice of the World, the Ransom of Mankind, the Conquerour of Hell, the Purchaser of his Chosen? *Quapropter, Wherefore God also—hath given him a Name, which is far above every name, Phil. 2. 9. Absit, therefore, saith S. Paul, ut gloriarer nisi in cruce Christi; God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of Christ, Galat. 6. 14.*

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5. This they *talked of*, as the main matter of Heavenly Discourse. What do *Moses* and the Prophets, Angels and Archangels talk and discourse of? They wonder at and adore the Death of *Christ*, and Redemption of the Church.

6. This they *talked of*, in care and solicitude for the Church on Earth. They themselves are in Glory: Ay, but their Brethren yet, as the two Tribes, fight for their Brethren. *Securi de se, Solliciti pro nobis.* But,

2. How do they talk of it? Reduce all to these three Heads:

1. *Prædicentes*; Foretelling him of it. Not but that *Christ* foresaw it himself; but this Dispensation he used, to know it by Scriptures, and these Revelations.

2. *Gratias agentes*; Adoring him for it, magnifying his Goodness; as the twenty four Elders, *Thou art worthy to receive Honour and Blessing; for thou hast redeemed us.*

3. *Orantes ut acceleret*; Begging the accomplishment. *Peter* sollicitus him, not to die; *Moses* and *Elias*, they solicit him to finish that glorious Work, upon which their Salvation, and the Salvation of the whole Church depended.

Use.

1. *Christus in gloria meditatur de morte*; His Glory makes him not forget his Death. How should we season all our thoughts of joy, with thoughts of our departure?

2. Do these glorious Saints talk of Death? Oh! let it take up our thoughts; let it be much in our meditations.



O N

The Transfiguration.

The Fourth Sermon.

S. Luke IX. 31, 32.

Who appeared in Glory, and spake of his Decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

But Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his Glory, and the two Men that stood with him.



WE have seen, in general, the Sum of this Conference about *Christ's* Decease: Now look upon it more particularly, and with accommodation to our selves. So, we discover four Particulars:

1. Here is *Colloquium de morte*; They talk and confer of his Death and Passion.

2. Here is *Natura & conditio mortis*; 'Tis *Exodus*, a deceasing, or departure.

3. Here is *Susceptio hujus conditionis*; It is a fulfilling.

4. Here is *Circumstantia susceptionis*; It must be at *Jerusalem*.

First, Here is *Colloquium de morte*. *Christ* puts himself into this premeditation of Death, for two purposes:

1. As

1. As a moderation of his present Glory and Majesty, into which he is advanced. Being thus magnified by his Father, and raised to an high pitch of Glory, he seasons it with this deep and serious Meditation of his Death and Passion. The thoughts of our End and Dissolution are never unseasonable; but yet they are most suitable and seasonable in our greatest Advancements and Prosperity. When you abound with all outward Comforts, then allay and moderate thy Joy with this mortifying Meditation, I must lie down in the Grave.

Thus *Christ* interchangeably; In his Humiliation, he refresheth himself with the expectation of Glory: When he stands at the Bar, *Ye shall see* (saith he) *the Son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven*, Matth. 26. 64. And so before his Passion; *O Father, glorifie me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the World was*, Joh. 17. 5. Contrarily; being in the state of Glory, he puts himself into the cogitations of Death. When the *Grecians* came to visit and do honour to him, he discourseth of his Passion; *Except a Corn of Wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone*, Joh. 12. 24. Naturally, Abundance and Worldly Prosperity raises our thoughts too high, makes us forgetful, nay, to abhor the mention of Death. Greatness, like *Ahasuerus*, will have no Mourning nor Sackcloth, *Esther* 4. 2. to appear before him. As the Wiseman hath it, *O mors, quam amara!* Eccles. 41. 1. *O Death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to them that are at ease in their possessions!* The thought of Death, it should be like that *Stimulus carnis*, that Thorn in the Flesh, to *St. Paul*, lest I should be puffed up with abundance of Revelations. Thus the Apostle exhorts; *Brethren, the time is short.—Let them that rejoice, be as though they rejoiced not,—and they that use the World, as not overusing it, for the fashion of the World passeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. Thus *Abraham*, admitted into conference with God, crys out, *I am but dust and ashes*, Gen. 18. 27. And *Jacob*, being in honour in Egypt, saith, *Few and evil have the days of my life been*, Gen. 47. 9. Thus *Joseph of Arimathea* made his Grave in his Garden.

Christ puts himself into this premeditation of Death,

2. As a condition of his future Glory. This Transfiguration, it was a glimpse of his after-Glory, into which he was to enter: a pawn and pledge of the full Possession. But yet, as knowing that through sufferings and death he must enter into it, he premeditates, and considers of his Death and Passion. Thus he must suffer, and enter into his Glory, Luke 24. 26.

No certainty or evidence of Glory and Salvation, must make us forget, nay, it ought daily to remind us of the means and conditions of our Glory. *Rom.* 8. 17. *Joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we also may be glorified together.* Our hope of Heaven, like the Discourse of the Spies, Oh it is a good Land! should encourage us to endure any thing: Let us arm our selves, say they, and fight for it, and win it with the Sword. If I be Predestinate, I shall be saved, live as I list, it is the voice of an Atheist. No: *Having these Promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Let us work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12.

Use.

This should teach us to be frequent and abundant in these thoughts of Death; to season all our Meditations, and Actions, with that deep consideration. It hath a manifold virtue and use in our whole lives.

1. It hath a virtue of abating the glut and surfeit of all wordly pleasures; it will damp those vain lusts that boil in our Hearts. Let the Adulterer know that his Body must one day lie in the Grave, it will make him tremble at the defiling of it: Let this thought appear like the Hand-writing on the Wall, it will make the Cup fall out of the hand of the Drunkard. Let the Covetous man hear of, *Stulte, hac nocte, Thou fool, this night shall thy Soul be taken from thee*, and he will moderate his craving thoughts.

2. It

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2. It hath a Virtue of perswading to Repentance, and Reconciliation with God; and preserving of such a Conscience, that may not affright, but refresh, and comfort us in our last need.

3. It hath a power of abating the fear and horror of Death when it approacheth. Death's Face is dismal: acquaint thy self daily with it, view it, look upon it, forecast it in thy Mind; it will not seem terrible, when it approacheth to thee. 'Tis good to bear this meditation in thy youth.

That's the first; *Colloquium de morte.*

Secondly, Here is *Natura mortis, & Conditio*; 'tis *Exitus, exodus*; A departure. It looks two ways:

1. Respectively to this Life.

2. Respectively to Death.

1. Respectively to this Life; so it is *Negatio Durationis*: It tells us, This life, it is not a state of perpetuity, and continual duration. *Exodus* here, is never used, but in the Peoples leaving of *Egypt*, in their departure from thence. Their being there, was but a sojourning in a strange Land, as God calls it. *Egypt* was no perpetuity. This is the Faith of all the Saints professed, *Heb. 11. 13.* They confessed they were *Strangers and Pilgrims upon the Earth*; they had no abiding place; dwelt in Tents, as Strangers, and Travellers; laid no Foundations, sought an after-City. Thus our Life is called the time of a Souldier; the stay of a Way-faring man; the Age of an Hireling; all terms of flitting, and expiration; an Apprentiship, a Stewardship; all limited and determining.

Respectively to Death; so it is, *Negatio Annihilationis*. Death is a departure, therefore no destruction, and absolute cessation. Were we of the Faith of the *Sadduces*, Death were no removal, departure, passage; but a quenching of the life, a destruction of the Soul, an annihilation of the Spirit. No, our Souls die not, but depart only. *Solomon* calls it, *A returning of the Soul to God*, *Eccles. 12. 7.* Immortality is a part of that Image of God, which remains indelible. *St. Paul* calls Death, *A dissolution*, or separation; not a destruction, and annihilation. The light of Nature taught it the Heathen, and the light of Scripture assures it us. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*, *1 Cor. 15. 19.* The very Philosophers discourse of the Regions of Souls, and World of Spirits; and places of abode, even after this life.

Use.

1. Is *Mors, exitus*? Is Death a departure? It must make that word sound in our Ears, *Migremus hinc*; fix not your rest, and abode in this World. The Saints profess, they belong to another City. Indeed *David* calls the wicked, *The men of this World*, *Psal. 17. 14.* They settle here, make this their Heaven: But this must assure us, this life is but an Annuity, it is not a Perpetuity. *The fashion of this World passeth*, saith *S. Paul*. *The World passeth away, and the lust thereof*, saith *S. John*. *Sedemus hic juxta flumina Babylonis, omnia transeunt*. Look upon all things here, as such that must be left. He who is to remove from a Farm, takes not that care as if it were his own; 'tis not mine Inheritance. Engage not your selves too deeply, build not too strongly. The *Rechabites* expecting Captivity, built no Houses, but dwelt in Tents.

2. Is *Mors, exitus*? Is Death a departure? Then see thou finish all thy work, *Quia decedendum*. What thou hast to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the Grave, whither thou goest, *Eccles. 9. 10.* Might we stay as long as we list, or return again when we please, then we might presume; but, *Statutum est semel mori*, It is appointed for men once to die, *Heb. 9. 27.* If we were to return, and die again, we might recover our omissions; but we must accomplish all now; for if Death once comes, there is no return from the Grave. It is otherwise with our *Exodus*, than with the *Israelites*: they carried their Dough upon their Shoulders; they had not prepared for themselves any Vi&uals, *Exod. 12. 39.* but they did it in their passage: But if our departure find our work unfinished,

nished, there is no recovery; then all thoughts perish, all hands fall; no work, or counsel, or purpose any more. Ser. IV.

3. Is *Mors, exitus*? Is Death a departure? Provide, and forecast for a place of refuge. Death is like a cruel Landlord, turns us out of Doors. What folly is it, not to provide a place to receive us? This *Christ* commends in the Parable of the Steward; *Make to your selves friends—that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations, Luk. 16. 9.* This was our Saviour's comfort, *I leave the World, and go to the Father, Joh. 16. 28.* This was the perplexity of men without *Christ*; the wisest of them knew not what became of their Spirits;

Animula, vagula, blandula,

Quæ abibis in loca? whether upward, or downward, as *Solomon* speaks. They that are *Christ's*, are assured of a place after their departure. *We know, if our Earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an House not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens, Verf. 2. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our House which is from Heaven.* This made *Lot* willing to forsake *Sodom*, that he had a *Zoar* to retire to; and the *Israelites* to leave *Egypt*, that they had a *Canaan* to go to. It was a judgment upon the false Prophet, that he should go from Chamber to Chamber to hide himself, *1 Kings 22. 25.*

That's the second, *Natura, & Conditio Mortis.*

Thirdly, Here is *Susceptio Conditionis*. It is called an accomplishment, or fulfilling; *πληρογυν*. It is Active, not Passive; not to be fulfilled upon him, but by him; he himself to accomplish. *Christ's* Death, as appointed by God, was unavoidable, and necessary; as inflicted by his Enemies, it was violent and enforced; yet he himself, voluntarily undergoing and performing of it, it is his action, and fulfilling. *Christ's* sufferings were not bare sufferings, but voluntary performances. He was Lord of his own life; *No man takes it from me; I lay it down.* That which gave merit and acceptation to *Christ's* Sufferings, was his willing, and free, and active undertaking of it. And as in *Christ*, so in Christians, their sufferings, their Deaths, they are active in them, not Patients only. A wicked man, Death gnaws upon him, he is snatch'd to Death; a Christian willingly admits of it; When God calls, he offers himself, as *Christ* did. *Quis tam facile dormivit? I lie me down and rest. Egrederere, ô Anima.—Non repetent animam, ego reddam.*

Now this under-going of Death, it is called an accomplishing, a fulfilling;

1. In respect of God's Counsel, and Ordination. *Christ's* Death was appointed from Eternity; he had purposed and forelaid it. *Act. 4. 28. To do whatsoever thy Hand, and thy Counsel determined before to be done: He is the Lamb slain from the beginning of the World,* in God's Wisdom appointing it, in his Truth promising it, in Faith believing it; only his actual suffering, that accomplish'd it. *Ought not Christ to suffer these things, and so to enter into his glory?* This makes *Christ* so studious to admit of Death; else how should the Scripture be fulfilled?

This consideration makes the Saints suffer all things, Death it self, naturally, willingly. *This Commandment received I of my Father; The end of my times are in thy hand. To God belong the issues of Death, Ps. 68.* If chance, or violence only appears, Flesh and Blood may struggle; but Gods appointment, that makes us submit; *I held my peace, because it is thy doing.* *Moses*, when God expressed his resolution, he must die, importunes no more, goes up to the Mountain, lays down his life. *St. Peter* laid down his life, as the Lord had shewed him; *The Will of the Lord be done.*

2. Death is called an accomplishment, or fulfilling of our departure, because that is but the closure and ending. All our life, 'tis a beginning, and progress to our end. As all *Christ's* life, it was a *pro-passio* to his *Passio*; his sufferings were all *Via ad mortem*; so our life, it is a progress to Death. We no sooner come into the World, but we begin to go out. *We die daily* in this sense. That part our life that is gone, it is *Morti deputanda*; it runs upon the score of Death. Indeed Eternal Life, it is *tota, & simultanea possessio vitæ*, 'tis *vita in statu*, fixed; but

Ser. IV: but this is in *fluxu*, as Waters always flowing. Youth, 'tis the death of Childhood; Man-hood, the death of Youth; Age, the death of Man-hood; then Death closes all. Philosophers say, *motus* and *terminus* are but one thing really; so our passing and consummation of life, it is but one continued death.

That's the third, *Susceptio conditionis*.

Fourthly, Here is *Circumstantia susceptionis*; the place of accomplishment, *Hierusalem*.

Conceive the purpose of it in three Expressions;

1. It is, *Locus singulariter designatus*, a place singularly designed. All the Circumstances of *Christ's* Death were fore-set and appointed; the time of it was foretold, and calculated by *Daniel*; the manner of it was prefigured, and foretold by the Prophets; the place, all the occasions, instruments, and circumstances were designed. As the Paschal-Lamb, was not only commanded to be slain, but on what day, in what place it was to be dressed, in what manner to be eaten.

And as it is so in *Christ's* Death, so likewise in ours. Our times are set and fixed; the period of our life, the circumstance of place, all occurrents fore-laid. Thus God appoints *Moses*, and *Aaron*, both time and place to die in. Thus *Elias* must now, and in such a manner be assumed. Thus *S. Peter* was forewarned, by what manner of Death he must glorify God. So *Agabus* shews *St. Paul* how he must be bound. It must settle our Hearts; our lives are in God's Book set, that time is fixed; as was the *Exodus* of the *Israelites*, the self-same day. It must make us resign up our selves, our deaths, the whole carriage of them, to God's wise disposal.

2. It is, *Locus typicè præfiguratus: Hierusalem*, that was foretold, and prefigured as the place of *Christ's* Death. This was prefigured in *Isaac's* Offering on Mount *Moriab*. On this Hill *David* Offer'd, to cease the Plague. This place he appointed, to build the Temple on. There was no Altar we know allowed, but this of *Hierusalem*. Here the Passover was to be slain and eaten. Thus the Apostle, *Heb. 13. 11. The bodies of those Beasts, whose Blood was brought into the Sanctuary by the High Priest for sin, are burnt without the Camp, v. 12. Wherefore, Jesus also that he might sanctify the People with his own Blood, suffered without the Gate. It must seal up unto us the fulfilling of all our Redemption. Every Circumstance was prefigured, and is now accomplished. Now was the great Jubilee when Christ died; now the whole Burnt-Offering was tendered up to God.*

3. It is, *Locus moraliter præfigurans Ecclesiam*. *Christ* must die at *Hierusalem*; that is, his death it is proper to, and effectual for his Church and People. Out of the bounds of the Church, there is no Redemption, or Salvation. He who is out of this Ark, perishes; he who eats the Passover out of this House, is accursed; he who lives out of this *Hierusalem*, is an Heathen. They err, who teach, In any Religion there is possibility of Salvation. No, *Salvation is of the Jews*, said *Christ*; so now, Of the Christians. *Basan* is an high Mountain; but this is God's Mountain, where it pleaseth him to dwell. They err too, who teach, that *Christ's* sufferings may profit even *extra Ecclesiam*; and that there is a common Grace beyond the Pales of the Church. No, no Sacrifice but in *Hierusalem*, no Grace but in the Church. That is the place to which God hath respect: *There he hath commanded a blessing, and life for evermore. If Shimei peep in Hierusalem, (his lines pass but to Gath) he dies for it.*

Enough of the Conference, about *Christ's* decease.

Come we now to the Entertainment that the Apostles gave to this glorious Transfiguration, *v. 32*. It represents the Apostles in three particularities;

1. In a weakness, and indisposition; *They were heavy with sleep.*
2. In a more attentive view, and contemplation, when they were awake, *They saw his Glory, and the two men, that stood with him.*
3. In a sudden, and passionate affection, motion, and Petition, *v. 33.*

First, Here we see the Apostles in a great weakness and indisposition; all fallen into a sleep. That we may the better conceive the Nature, and Original of this their condition at this time, we may resolve it into these three considerable estimations of it.

1. As a Natural infirmity ;
2. As a Carnal indisposition ;
3. As a Spiritual amazement, and consternation.

I. Conceive it, *ut naturalis infirmitas*, as a Natural Infirmity. No doubt but they were bound to have attended with all vigilancy upon this manifestation of our Saviour, exacting of them a stedfast watching and careful observation, as *Elijah to Elifha, If thou seeft me when I am taken from thee* ; yet here these choice Apostles are clogg'd with those humane imperfections, and overtaken with sleep, when they should have been awakened to most attention. Nay the Evangelist singles out *Peter*, as the chief Sleeper. So in the Garden, these when they should have assisted and refresh'd *Christ* in his Passion, they were then fallen asleep again. And *Christ* singles out *Peter* ; *Simon, couldst thou not watch one hour* ? It is true, as Commentators conceive, it was in the time of Sleep. *Peter*, and the rest were no Church-sleepers ; but being called to watch on Mount *Tabor*, and *Christ* Praying all Night, the weakness of Nature prevailed upon them. This is the condition of the best Saints ; *Corpus quod corrumpitur, degravat animam*. We live here a life of necessities ; we should wish to have Evangelical bodies, always to attend his Glory, and service. But while we bear about us these clogs of corruption, we are sunk downward, even in our best performances. This makes the Saints groan, not only under sinful corruptions, but natural necessities ; fain would they be freed from them, that they might be always exercised in Heavenly performances. *A necessitatibus meis erue me, Domine*.

But are these three noted not without imputation, *that they are asleep*, although excusable by those forenamed Circumstances ? it puts the occasion into my mouth to awaken our Church-sleepers, and drowsie Auditors. A fault though pardonable, if rarely, and seldom, and little done ; yet let us question their practice, who, like *Solomon's* sluggard, *Fold up themselves in sleep* ; and like *Esay's* Dogs, *Delight in sleeping*.

1. Whence may it arise ?

2. What may it procure ?

1. The evilness of the Root.

2. The bitterness of the Fruit will condemn it as sinful.

1. *Quæ radix* ? What is the Root whence it springs ?

1. Sometimes out of Infirmity ; and a Child of God, and one whose Heart seeks the Lord, may be overtaken. That is my case, faith every one, it is mine Infirmity, I wish it were otherwise. But if it be an Infirmity, we may know it by these signs ;

1. It will be counted an Infirmity if we grieve for it, and be sorry, and humbled, and troubled at it. Let the sin be never so small, yet if thou continuest in it securely, with delight, or content ; if thy Heart smite thee not for it ; thou art excluded from the plea of Infirmity.

2. If it be to be accounted as a pardonable Infirmity, then we will strive against it ; we shall find a contrary holy inclination, a rousing us out of it. Thus *Christ* excused his Apostles sleeping, *Matth. 26. 41. The Spirit is willing, but the Flesh is weak*. He saw, their desires were good. Didst thou ever labour against it, pray against it, make a *Covenant with thine Eyes*, as *Job* speaks ?

3. If we daily get some strength, and prevailing against it : If we live and lie in our Infirmity, and after warning, never improve it ; it ceases to be accounted an Infirmity ; 'tis to be reckon'd a voluntary sin.

2. Sometimes it arises from our immoderate labours, defrauding our selves of a due refreshing, and so enforcing us to make bold with God's House and Day to take up our rest. This makes it more sinful. God appointed a preparation to his Sabbath, that Body and Soul may be better fitted and enabled. *Have ye not Houses to eat and to drink in*, faith *St. Paul* ? Hath not God given you the Night for to sleep, say I, and your Houses and Beds to rest in, but you must despise the Church of God ?

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3. Sometimes ignorance and deadness of understanding is the cause of it. When the Spirit of a Man is unacquainted with what he hears, when they are things that his Understanding skills not of, naturally the Soul sinks into heedlessness, and drowsiness of Spirit. *Didst thou know the Gift of God; Didst thou consider, that the Word that is spoken is Life and Power; wert thou acquainted with the Mystery of Godliness, it could not but extort attention. But when we sit as meer Gallio's, regarding nothing, no wonder though we sleep.*

4. Sometimes Prophaneness, and Neglect, and Contempt of God's Ordinances, that is the Original. They account the Sabbath a lost Day; *What will this Babler speak?* They who see no Beauty in God's Sanctuary; that say, We know what the Preacher can say; such unclean Dogs delight in sleeping. Oh! *David* had such delight in God's Word, and calling upon him, that he awakened at midnight; thy dull Prophaneness makes thee sleep at noon-day. *Indecens Christiano, si radius Solis inveniat dormientem: Aug.* How much more unbecoming is it, that the Sun of Righteousness should take us napping? *Awake therefore, thou Sleeper, and call upon thy God.*

5. Sometimes Satan works it in Men. As he is a dumb Spirit, or a deaf Spirit, so sometimes he is a sleepy, drowsie Spirit. He hates to see us spiritually exercised: And if he cannot otherways, yet this way he can prevent the working of God's Word: He can, like *Mercury*, lay Souls asleep, *lest they should hear with their ears, and believe with their hearts, and should be saved.* As on *Saul* and his Servants, a Sleep from God fell upon them; so a Sleep from Satan falls upon many, till they be robbed, like *Samson*, of all that they had.

Hæ sunt radices.

2. *Qui fructus?* What doth this deserve?

1. It justly provokes God to sleep. We hear, that God hath his Sleep; *He awaked as one out of sleep, Psal. 78. 65.* Now God sleeps, when he is to us as one that sleepeth; that is, hears us not, regards us not: As *Baal*, It may be he is asleep, call aloud. Thou that sleepest when God speaks to thee, how dost thou deserve that God should sleep, and turn away, and not regard thee?

2. It justly provokes upon our selves even a spiritual Sleep. *Isaiah* tells us of a Spirit of slumber, *Isai. 29. 10. The Lord hath poured out upon you the Spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: Rom. 11. 8. God hath given them the Spirit of slumber; eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day.* This is a fearful Judgment, for a man to be spiritually asleep; to have our Senses closed up against all spiritual Inspiration, our Understandings overcast, our Memories bound, our Motions fetter'd, our Tongues muzzled, not able to call upon God, not able to avoid any danger, to foresee any occurrent.

3. It justly deserves even *Eutychus* his Judgment, *Acts 20. 9.* who fell into a dead Sleep. Our prophane customary use of it, provokes the Hand of God against us. Consider what *S. Peter* saith, *Their punishment sleeps not,* and will one day upbraid them: *Can you not awaken one hour?* Then, *Ex lethargicis sient phrenitici; Aug.* They shall awaken out of a Lethargy, and fall into a Phrensie.

So much *de Humana Infirmitate.*

II. This Sleep of the Apostles, conceive it *ut Carnalis Indispositio*, it is a representation of our Carnal Indisposition. It represents our Incapacity for any Heavenly Revelation. *Christ* reveals himself in Glory; the Nature of man, in our Corruption, is so dull, and incapable, that it is utterly unfit to reach those Mysteries. Naturally our Understanding is most dull and unteachable in these spiritual Truths. In civil and common Truths, we are quick-witted and apprehensive; but in the things of God, the greatest manifestation doth not affect us. *The natural man, & Nihilus, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned, 1 Cor. 2. 14.* As the Eye of man, to see the Earth, and ordinary things, is sharp enough; but let it look upon the Sun, then it is dazzled. *Aristotle* compares us to Owls Eyes, that are quick-sighted in the dark, but blind in the Sun-shine.

No,

No, as they say, besides *Objectum Gloriosum*, there must be *Lumen Gloriæ*, else it is not seen: So there must be *Lumen Gratiæ*, God must open our Understandings, or else we cannot discern Spiritual things. See this in the Pharisees, *Nicodemus*, the Woman of *Samaria*; *Christ* tells her of *Living Water*, for her life she cannot conceive any other than Water of ordinary use. Such is our blindness, that by Nature we are utterly incapable of these Spirituals. Ser. IV.

III. Conceive it *ut Supernaturalis Consternatio*. The terrour of this glorious Vision, it hath amazed them; so overcome their Spirits, that they are sunk into astonishment. We find the best of God's Saints thus wrought upon by God's appearance. *Abraham*, Gen. 15. 12. God appeared to him, and a deep sleep fell upon him; and lo, an horreur of great darkness fell upon him: So *Ezekiel*, 1. 28. At the Vision of God he fell down upon his face: So *Daniel*, 10. 8. When he saw the Vision, there remained no strength in him; for his comeliness was turned in him into corruption, and he retained no strength, ver. 9. And when he heard the voice of his words, then was he in a deep sleep on his face, and his face toward the ground: So *S. John*, seeing the Glory of *Christ*, he was struck with astonishment; And when I saw him (saith he, Rev. 1. 17.) I fell at his feet as dead.

This Dread arises,

1. Out of the disproportion 'twixt Humane Frailty and God's Glory. *Excellens objectum, destruit sensum*. The Sun in its strength dazles the Eyes of man; much more must the Glory of God. *The Angels hide their faces*. We shall surely die, because we have seen God, *Judg.* 13. 22.
2. Secret guiltiness of Frailty and Corruption, makes every appearance of God's Majesty fearful. Not only wicked men (as the Soldiers at the appearance of the Angel, *Matth.* 28.) have been confounded, but the holiest men do tremble and fear at God's appearance. Their hearts tell them, they are *Stipula in igne*, as Stubble ready to be consumed in this Flame of Glory. *Even our God is a consuming Fire*.

And if Saints be thus affrighted and confounded, what terrour shall seize upon the Wicked, and damned Reprobates, at his great Appearance? If this comfortable Transfiguration were so dreadful to the Apostles, how shall they approach near him when he shall come against them in Flames of Fire? Oh! then shall they call to the Mountains to hide them, and the Hills to cover them. If glimpses of Glory be dreadful, what will the ugly appearance of Hell and Vengeance be? *Who can dwell with devouring Fire? Who can dwell with everlasting Burnings?*

Thus we have considered the Apostles in their Weakness:

Secondly, Let us consider them in their more attentive view and contemplation of his Glory. It is a good Rule, *Lex vigilantibus, & non dormientibus prodest*: So, every Manifestation of *Christ*, it cannot affect them, who shut their Eyes against it. *Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*, *Ephes.* 5. 14. The Sun may shine, but they who close their Eyes cannot see it. Outward Revelations profit not, except an inward Inspiration awaken us to behold them.

When they were awake;

1. They saw his Glory. First they sleep, then they are awakened, then they behold him. It figures out unto us the order of our enjoying the Face of God: First, we must all sleep the sleep of Death; our Mortality cannot admit of that Vision: then, when we shall awaken out of that sleep, we shall arise renewed, strengthened, and see his Majesty. Now Faith represents him: The Eye of Faith must be closed by Death; then, at our Resurrection, we, who sleep in the dust, shall be raised, and stand before him: *Psal.* 17. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness*.

2. They saw the two men that stood with him. Saw them, that is, knew them. But how could they know those whom they never saw?

1. Some Papists tell us, They had seen their Pictures. So *Stella*, &c.
2. May be, *Ex Colloquio*, that is the best learning of *Moses* and *Elias*.
3. Rather, *Ex lumine Gloriæ*; and to foreshew us the Happiness of Hea-

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ven: Then we shall see and know certainly all the Saints past and gone: As *Samuel*, *lumine Prophetiæ*, knew *Saul*, *antea non visum*; so shall we converse with all the Saints, *Adam* knew his Wife, as soon as she was brought to him.



O N

The Transfiguration.

The Fifth Sermon.

S. Luke IX. 33.

And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three Tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; not knowing what he said.



WE have seen the Entertainment that the Apostles gave to this glorious Transfiguration;

First, In their weakness and indisposition.

Secondly, In their more attentive view and contemplation.

Now follows,

Thirdly, Their manner of Entertainment, in a sudden, and passionate, and affectionate Suit and Petition.

The Text then represents that Effect which this glorious Appearance wrought in the Apostles. This ravishing Joy stirs up in them a sudden, passionate Suit, and Request, for a constant enjoying of this glorious Vision. And it stands upon three Particulars:

1. Is the Occasion of this Request; that is, the departing and withdrawing of *Moses* and *Elias*: *As they departed from him.*
2. Is the Sum and Substance of the Request; specified,
 1. In the Person who makes it, *Peter*: *Peter said.*
 2. In the Person to whom it is tendred, to Christ: *Jesus, Master.*
3. The Request it self. In it,
 1. A Motion for Continuance; *It is good for us to be here.*
 2. A Proffer of Service to further this Continuance; *And let us make three Tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.*
 3. The Censure of this Request; what Judgment the Holy Ghost passes upon it; it was unwarrantable, unadvised; *Not knowing what he said.*

First, The Occasion of this Request; The departure of *Moses* and *Elias*. These two Saints now withdraw themselves from this glorious Appearance, and betake themselves to those Eternal Habitations from whence they were called to attend our Saviour.

The Reason and Purpose of this present departure, and leaving Mount *Tabor*, may be given in divers Congruities:

1. Respectively to themselves.

2. Respectively

2. Respectively to *Christ*.

3. Respectively to the Apostles.

I. Respectively to themselves; *They departed*:

1. *Quia officio functi*; They have performed that Service for which they were sent; they had testified of *Jesus* his Deity, and Mediatorship; done Homage to him as their God, and Saviour. Having performed this Service, they depart from him, and leave the World.

It represents to us the date of the Saints continuance with us; they have their Employment, and having finished that Work, they are removed and withdrawn from us. Till *Moses* hath done his Work, no weakness nor decay appeared in him; when that time is finish'd, no strength can prolong him. *Elias* must not be weary of his life, till he hath finished his Course; when that is accomplished, he is fetched away presently. The Saints, in this respect, are like to *Jacob's* Vision of Angels; they were all *Ascendentes & descendentes, non commorantes*. As *S. Chrysostom*, comparing those two places in the *Acts*; first, *S. Paul's* escaping in a Basket out of *Damascus*, *Acts* 9. 24. and his resolute going to *Jerusalem*, *Acts* 21. 13. observes, till *S. Paul* had done his Work, he shifts for his Life; when he had finished it, he offers himself to death. It is the Condition of all the Saints, *Having served their generations, according to the Counsel of God*, they are withdrawn, and no more converse with us. As a faithful Servant makes no lingering or delays, but being sent, and having dispatched his Business, as *Elizus's* Servant, salutes no man, but returns back again. We wish the continuance of the Saints with us: No, they have their Work set them, their Time set them; and having accomplished that, they must not fix here, but return to him whose Agents and servants they are. *Moses* and *Elias* discharging their Office of Attestation to *Christ*, are called into Heaven again; *They departed*.

2. *Quia à visione removendi*; They have a view of *Christ* Incarnate, but they must not yet fully and constantly enjoy him, but transiently, and so depart from him. Their joy in Heaven will not be full, till *Christ* be there at his glorious Ascension. Now they are graced with this temporary interview, and withdrawn from it. Even the glory of the Saints in Heaven is thus dispensatively, and by degrees, vouchsafed unto them. They in Heaven lived in expectation of this blessed Appearance: and, till then, listening, and looking to see their Saviour; they cry, *How long, Lord, how long?* As before his Descension, the Saints on Earth cried, *Oh that thou wouldst bow the Heavens, and come down!* So they in Heaven were wishing, *Oh that the Heavens might open to receive him back again.* Their full consummation will not be made perfect, till we, with *Christ*, be caught up in the Clouds. They are, *Sub Altare, non super Thronos*. They are clothed in Whites, *Sed nondum Duplicibus induuntur*; they must wait for that accomplishment. We are in *Tabernaculis*, they in *Atriis*, but not in *Thronis*.

3. *Quia ad statum redituri*; Because they were to return to their former state. This their appearance on Earth was Extraordinary, and Miraculous, by special Dispensation; but their Abode and Mansion, that's in Heaven. The presence of the Saints departed, is not to be expected, nor imagined, but only in these cases of Miraculous Employment. There is not only a gulph of Separation 'twixt Hell and Heaven, but a distance of Separation also 'twixt Heaven and us. We have heard, in Popery, of the many Walkings and Appearances of the Saints departed: But they are all of them Dreams of deceived Men, or Lies of deceiving Devils, except this Appearance. There is no conversation of dead Men on Earth, *Lazarus* must not leave *Abraham's* Bosom not to ease *Dives*, not to convert his Brethren. What is said of *Christ*, is true of the Saints, *Whom the Heavens must contain*. They go from hence, and are seen no more.

They departed,

II. Respectively to *Christ*.

1. They depart from *Christ*, *Gloriam deposituro*: This Attendance and Service done to *Christ* by these Saints, it is but temporary, and to cease; and so these glorious Spirits, having honoured him with their presence, are sequestred from

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from him. As *Christ* assumed this Transfiguration, so now he resumes his state of Abasement. When he is invested with his full Glory, then they follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes. Now he leaves his glorious guard of Angels, and Saints, and sorts himself with mortal, weak, contemptible men. This Transfiguration, it was *Actus Gloriæ*, but not *Status*. As to *Moses* and *Elias*, he shews his Glory as he passeth by them; they saw but his back-parts; but till his full *Consummation* est, he puts himself into the exercise of his Humiliation.

2. They depart from him, *In Ecclesia permansuro*. *Moses* and *Elias*, they have their limited time, but they must vanish; *Christ*, he abides in his Church, and remains for ever. The Ministry of the Law by *Moses*, and the Prophets, it was but till the time of Reformation, *Heb. 9. 10*. But when *Christ* is manifested, and he assumes the regiment of his Church, then he is the only Governour and Master. *The Servant abides not in the House for ever, but the Son abideth for ever*, *Joh. 8. 35*. They served to usher in *Christ* into the World; and he being present, they vail and give place. The Law was dated, and limited; but the Gospel, 'tis *An everlasting Gospel*, *Rev. 14. 6*. *Divers ways he spake unto the Fathers, in times past, by the Prophets; but now by his Son*, *Heb. 1. 1, 2*. And there are none to come after him. These gave light, as *A Candle shining in a dark place*, *2 Pet. 1. 19*. *Lucerna & accendi debet, & extingui potest*: *Christ* is as the bright Day-star, nay, as the glorious Sun. *Floruit hoc semen in figuris; prodeunte fructu, flos decidit*. *St. John's* acknowledgment suits *Moses*, and all the Prophets, *He must increase, but I must decrease*, *Joh. 3. 30*. *Old things are passed away, all things become new*.

III. This departure of them, is respectively to the Apostles;

1. To teach them, that this Revelation, and Vision of Glory, is not to be perpetual. The Apostles are loth to leave Heaven, and to relinquish this happiness: Yes, but though they have a ravishing interview, yet they must be parted. *Joseph's* Brethren were invited to dine with *Joseph*, but yet they must back again into *Canaan* to their Charge and Families, and not abide there, till all come with them. So, the Saints have some ravishing apprehensions; and are lift up, many times, in the sweetness of God's favour, even to the Heavens; they are among the Angels, but it is not lasting. *Secundum banc gratiam, recessurus accedit, & recedit accessurus*. These joys are transient, we cannot sit by them. *S. Aug.* on those words, *Let the Hearts of those rejoice that seek the Lord*, tells us, We must only have *Gaudium quærentium, non comprehendendum*. Thus *Christ* appear'd, and soon after vanished.

They depart,

2. *Quia ad Scripturas remittendi*; These Saints leave them to the ordinary set course of the holy Scriptures. For extraordinary Assurance, they hear *Moses* and *Elias*; but for the ordinary standing course of Religion, *To the Law, and to to the Testimony*. We have a more sure word of the Prophets, saith *St. Peter*, comparatively to this Vision. God may visit us with miraculous Revelations; but that which we must stick to, is the life of Faith, and food of the Scriptures. For a while the *Israelites* were fed with *Manna*; but in *Canaan* they must feed upon the fruits of the Land. *Lazarus* must not go to *Dives* his Brethren, *They have Moses, and the Prophets, let them hear them*, *Luke 16. 29*. We have *St. Paul*, *St. Peter*, *Christ*, all, in the Scripture.

They depart,

3. That the Apostles *Uno Christo contenti sint*. The presence of these Saints is refreshing; but yet though they vanish, *Christ's* presence is sufficient. As *Christ* said, *All ye shall leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me*, *Joh. 16. 32*. So, if all other sweet societies break, yet it is enough if *Christ* abide with us. Rather be with *Christ* in a Dungeon, than in Heaven without him. We never prize *Christ* sufficiently, till he be to us instead of all comforts. Let us be sequestered from all the Saints. *Abraham* knows us not, *Israel* acknowledgeth us not, *Esa. 63. 16*. but thou art our Father, our Redeemer. *Christ* must be so;

1. For Faith and Doctrine, only *Christ*. Papists have their Saints, and sue to them; we have no such services, they are out of our sight; only *Christ* is with us. *Serm. V.*

2. For matter of Comfort; How often do we lose the Society of Saints, and those refreshing fellowships? Yet if *Christ* abide with us, if we enjoy his Company, it is enough. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee*, Psal. 73. 25. The Sun alone is more cheering, and refreshing, than all the Stars in the Firmament; so is *Christ*, than all the Saints.

So much for the Occasion. Come we,

Secondly, To the sum and substance of their request; specified,

1. In the Person, who makes it; *Peter*. No doubt, the two other were much affected with this Glory; but *Peter* is most fervent, and forward, and breaks out into this Passion. We find not any act of forwardness in *Peter*, but it is made by the Papists an Argument of Precedency. *Bellarmino* reckons up twenty Arguments of his Prerogative. If *Christ* do but enter into *Peter's* Boat, it is to invest him in a Supremacy. Whereas, not Supremacy, but Fervency, and sometimes Infirmary, often makes him outstrip his fellow-Apostles.

1. A little before this Transfiguration, *Matth.* 16. he was *Primus in Infidelitate*; *Christ* must not die, *Verf.* 22.

2. In this Transfiguration, he was *Primus in Infirmitate*. *Peter*, he was asleep, *Signantèr*; *Primus in Temeritate*, he breaks out first in this hasty motion. But as *S. Peter's* personal Infirmities are not imputable; so neither are his personal Graces communicable, nor his personal Prerogatives hereditary.

This Motion is specified,

2. In the Person to whom it is made; *Jesus, Master*: and conceive it in two expressions;

1. It is directed to *Christ*, not to *Moses*, or *Elias*; they make no Prayer, Motion, Suit to them; there is no intercourse or speech 'twixt the Apostles, and these Saints: purposely, all parley, or conference; much more Prayer and Invocation, is omitted, and restrained. *You are come to the Spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediatour*, Heb. 12. 23, 24. Prayers to Saints departed are unlawful. They are not to be made,

1. Not to Saints absent; *Quia Oratio est actus Rationis*; and it is a vain thing to Invoke those who are absent. Nay,

2. Not to present Saints; *Quia Oratio est actus Religionis*. All our Supplications must be thus directed, *Jesus, Master*: None is our *Master-Jesus*, but he.

2. It is directed to *Christ*, even concerning *Moses* and *Elias*: *Peter* being desirous of their stay, he begs it of *Christ*; accounting these Saints at his pleasure, for stay or departure. He is Commander and Governour of all in Heaven, and in Earth. His Command cited them, his Pleasure dismisses them, his Word can stay them; in all things he must *πρωτεύειν*. The Angels are his Attendants; Legions of Devils are at his Command; the highest Saints are at his beck: As *Pharaoh* to *Joseph*, *Without thee shall no man lift up his hand, or foot, in all the land of Egypt*, Gen. 41. 44. So God hath authorised *Christ*; no Saint, or Angel, but must attend his Pleasure. *Worship him all ye Saints*.

Thirdly, Come we to the request it self: And in it,

I. Of the Motion for Continuance; *Bonum est nobis esse hic*; *It is good for us to be here*. This is a mix'd Motion: And let us consider in it, *Quæ vera, & bona*; and then when we come to the Censure, we will consider, *Quæ temerè, & ineptè*.

In this Motion for Continuance, there are several Truths, and very considerable:

1. *Primò territi, nunc gaudio affecti*; First, we saw them cast into a kind of Astonishment, *In somno ecstatico*; now see it ends in Joy and Comfort. It is the order of Gods making himself known; first, to strike us with fear, to bring us to comfort; first, Astonishments; then, Consolations. Thus he dealt with *Mary*: first,

Serm. V. first, she was afraid; then, she was raised to *Sing her Magnificat*. So with *Zechary*: So, with the *Shepherds*. The Devil on the contrary, he breeds false joys, but leaves true terrours in the Soul. That's one Considerable.

2. *Societas Sanctorum semper desideranda*. Peter was loth to leave the Company, and Society of these holy men. Oh! It is good to be here always. *The Communion of Saints, it is a great part of Heaven: You are come to the Assembly of the First-born; to the Spirits of just men made perfect*. David professes, *Psal. 16. 3. All his delight is in the Saints on Earth*. Ill Company is a pattern of Hell; hasten from them: But the fellowship of the Saints is a ravishing comfort; hasten to them. Hast thou the Company of a Saint? Prize it; but, *Depart from the Tents of those wicked men, Numb. 16. 26*. That's a second Considerable. The last is,

3. The joys of Glory, and presence of *Christ*, are ravishing and transporting. Nothing doth so satisfy the Soul, and inebriate the Spirit, as these rays and beams of Glory. *Oh! taste and see how good, how sweet, God is*. Now how transporting the Comfort is, that is in the glorious presence of *Christ*, will appear by these five Comparisons:

1. Comparatively to all outward joys and comforts; It makes him forget all; he thinks not of Kindred, Friends, any Worldly comfort; he can be content never to go down from this Mount more; bids adieu to Father, Friends, Houses; all are nothing to being here.

2. Comparatively to all other manifestations of God out of *Christ*; *Moses*, he trembles; *Manoah* quakes; *Abraham* is astonished; *Daniel*, he is dead. Oh! God out of *Christ*, is fearful; God in *Christ*, is gracious. The Glory of God affrights; the Glory of *Christ*, cheers, and refreshes.

3. Comparatively to other entercourses with *Christ*. Peter heard his Heavenly Sermon on the Mount, yet said not then, *Bonum est esse hic*.

4. Comparatively to other miraculous manifestations, which would have taken us; as,

1. *In miraculo Cibationis*, when he fed five thousand:

2. *In captura Piscium*, In the great draught of Fish:

3. *In mutatione Vini*, When the Water was turned into Wine:

4. *In captura Argenti*, When the Fish was taken with Money in the mouth:

In all these manifestations of *Christ's* miraculous Power, we would have cried, *Bonum est esse hic*. But Peter was not affected with any of these: only, at this Transfiguration; Master, saith he, *It is good to be here*.

5. Comparatively to the fulness of Glory; That is not only ravishing, but this glimpse of Glory too; even the least degree of it.

Corollar. 1. If two Saints be so delightful; *Quid Societas omnium Angelorum, & Sanctorum?* What is the Company of all the Saints and Angels?

2. If a glimpse of Glory be so delicious, What is the fulness of it? *O, how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee! Psal. 31. 19.*

3. If *Gloria Humanitatis* be so transporting, How much more *Gloria Deitatis*?

4. If *Solo viso sic afficit, quid participatio?* If only the sight of Glory do so affect, What will the participation of it do?

We have seen the Motion for Continuance, It is good *being here*. Now follows,

II. The proffer of service to further this Continuance; *Let us make three Tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses, one for Elias*. It is a mix'd Motion; and though rash, unadvised, and unreasonable; yet for the generality, it carries with it some, not only excusable, but commendable affections, in St. Peter's making of it. It was, *Inconsulta, & prematura Devotio. Ambros.* Unadvised, and rash; but yet well-meant, and devout.

View the Prints of Devotion and Goodness that were in it; and in the Censure we shall see the weaknesses of it; the blots of imperfection that were in it.

1. The first Print of Devotion and Piety, is, that he proffers to erect a Tabernacle for *Christ*, and these Saints. Observe, The Presence of *Christ*, and his Saints is to be honoured with our best services: No pains, or cost, can be too precious

precious to entertain such a Presence as our Saviour's. *S. Peter* puts not off *Christ* with empty Observances; Adoring his Glory, Admiring his Beauty, with wishes only for his Continuance; but bethinks himself of dedicating, and devoting his Labours and Cost to Honour and Retain him. Naturally, Religion consults with the *Shunamite*, What shall we do for him? If he be a God, then there must be a Religion, and Worship; if that, then a Temple, or Tabernacle; and if that, then it must be answerable to his Glory, in the comeliest manner: These are the natural consequences of Reason and Piety. See *David*, how careful he was to erect a Tabernacle for Gods Worship? So forward was he, that the Prophet must restrain him, and cool his Devotion; *I will not serve the Lord with that which cost me nothing*; refusing ease, and help, to support the charge; but he will honour God with his Substance. He envied himself his own House, till God had his. *I dwell in Cedar*, and the Ark of God under Curtains. Nay, it takes up all his thoughts; he afflicts himself for it, *Psal. 132. 1. Lord, remember David, and all his afflictions: He would not climb up to his Bed—till he found out a place for the Lord.* Alas! we can be content to tender him some cheap Observances; but to be charged, for our Religion, to erect Tabernacles, to bestow pains, and cost, that sets us off; that is the best God, and Religion, that costs us least. Oh! It is an argument of our base esteem of God, of Religion, of our Souls, of the Kingdom of Heaven, when we murmur at any charge our Religion requires of us. The Lord upbraids the Jews, *Hiz. 1. 4. Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled Houses, and this House lie waste?* The Heathens scorned to hear of Cheapness in the service of their gods. *Phidias* perswading to make the Statue of *Minerva*, *In marmore, potius quam ebore*; said,

1. It would last better:

2. It was *vilius*, cheaper: The *Athenians* hissed at that reason.

2. The second Print of Piety in this motion of *Peter*, is, He consults with *Christ* in the choice of this service, that he would perform towards him: *Matth. 17. 4. Master, if thou wilt, let us make here three Tabernacles*; he submits to his Appointment and Direction in all this forwardness.

No Service or Worship is to be tendered to *Christ*, but what he allows and gives warrant to. *You shall not do whatsoever is good in your own eyes, but what I command you.* In matters of Religion, Invention is Superstition. As *Vincentius*, alluding to *S. Pauls* words, *Tradidi quod accepi; quod accepimus, non quod excogitavimus.* As they at *Samaria*, we must learn the manner of the God of the Country. *Moses*, though wise, and holy, yet refers the Worship of God to his own choice. *Exod. 10. 26. We know not with what we must serve the Lord, till we come thither.* And all his frame of the Tabernacle, must be done according to the pattern shewn in the Mount. *Id utique Deo dignum, quod ipse Deus sibi fatetur acceptum.* That God is to be worshipped, Nature tells us; but how, that is his Choice and Pleasure, and matter of Revelation. Strange fire was abominable; so are invented Services. Devotion in respect of forwardness, and cheerfulness, and frankness, asks and offers, *Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high God? Shall I come before him with Offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousands of Rivers of Oyl?* *Micah 6. 6, 7.* But Faith and Obedience takes this answer, *vers. 8. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires: Freewill-Offerings for their kind prescribed, these will be accepted.*

3. A third Print of Devotion, in this proffer of *S. Peter*, is, his care for *Christ*, and these two Saints. He thinks not of himself, and provision for his own safety and abode; he had no thoughts of a Tabernacle to shelter himself. Love, and Devotion to God and his Church, transports the Saints out of themselves, makes them even forget their own comforts in respect of God. All *S. Peter's* care and sollicitude, is for *Christ*. Love seeketh not her own; but the glory of *Christ* hath the first thoughts and deepest consultations. When self-love sways us, then we are all for our selves, take care for building our own Tabernacles, provide for our own. Whereas *Tertullian* observes, Not any that followed *Christ*, that ever questioned

Serm. V. how they should live: None said, *Non habeo, quo vivam. Pietas non respicit vitam, multo minus victum.*

1. It is enough for St. Peter to be, *In famulatu Christi*. Attendance upon him, is provision enough. As Noblemen count themselves more honoured to serve in the Court, than to Lord it in their own.

2. Faith knows, *Christ* will take care of them. Take thou care to provide for *Christ*, *Christ* will provide for thee. Let *Obed-Edom* prepare a Tabernacle for the Ark, the Ark shall bring a blessing upon his Tabernacle. As *Elias* to the Widow, Provide for me first, venture all thy Meal and Oyl, and be sure of a blessing of encrease. If *Christ* have a Tabernacle, he will not shut us out of doors. As God to *David*, *Because thou hast thought to build me a House, I will build thee a sure House.*

So much of *Peter's* proffer of furtherance for continuance of *Christ* and those two Saints with him. Now follows,

III. The Censure that the Scripture passes upon this Motion: It was inconsiderate and unadvised; *He knew not what he said.*

Take of it a double Consideration;

1. Consider the Nature and Condition of this sudden, inconsiderate Motion, whence it ariseth.
2. Consider the particular Conviction of this rashness in *Peter*, in the many particularities of his Error, in making it.

First, Consider the Nature and Condition of this Motion. Whence arose this sudden, and unadvised, and impertinent Motion of *Peter's*? It was from three Principles;

1. It arose, *Ex passione vehementi*: *Peter* being ravished and transported with this glorious Appearance of *Christ* in Majesty, is overtaken with a sudden Passion of joy, and fear too, saith St. Mark. Observe; Excessive Passions transport us sometimes to unadvised, unwarrantable thoughts and desires, even in matters of Piety and Devotion to *Christ*. See it in S. *Peter*, *Luk. 5. 8, 9.* there he was overtaken with a Passion of Fear at the great draught of Fish; it stirs up a strange, sudden Motion, *Lord, depart from me, for I am a sinful man*: His Fear abandons *Christ's* Presence and Society. Here, in this place, a Passion of Joy puts him upon a vain, inconsiderate suit; it casts him into a Dream, and he talks like one in a Dream, or Trance; *Psal. 126. 1. Then were we like men that dream. Job. 13. 8. Christ* offering to wash S. *Peter's* Feet, he is taken with a sudden Passion of preposterous Reverence, and Humility; *Lord, thou shalt never wash my feet.* So, again, *Matth. 16. 22. Christ* foretelling his death, *Peter* is overtaken with a preposterous Passion of Love, breaks out into this inconsiderate Motion, *Lord, be it far from thee; this shall not be unto thee.* So *James* and *John*, *Luke 9. 54. Christ* being excluded by the *Samaritans*, these two are taken with a sudden Passion of Anger and Revenge, and make a Motion accordingly; *Shall we call for Fire from Heaven, and consume them?* Thus God's Children, in rash and violent Passions, they conceive strange and unwarrantable Desires and Motions.

We must inspect, and so examine our passionate Wishes, check them, as *Christ* did *Zebedee's* Wives Suit, *You know not what you ask.* These passionate Motions are not so good,

1. *Quia minus fundata*; They have no root, or bottom, usually. As the stony ground had present joy, but without root, and so withered. Warmth of affection may make hasty proffers, that will vanish again. Deliberations and Resolutions must ground our Devotions: As *David*, *My heart is fixed: One thing have I desired, which I will require.*
2. *Quia minus accepta*; These hasty proffers are not set by, or valued by God. He judgeth of us by our constant bent in our cold temper. Thus he answered the young man, who was suddenly taken with a Miracle; *Lord, I will follow thee wheresoever thou goest.* No, *Christ* tells him what he must look for; let him sit down and cast the charges: As we judge of Rivers, not as they swell with fall of Waters, but as their own proper Current runs.

3. *Quia*

3. *Quia periculosa*; They are, oft-times, preposterous, and prejudicial to us. *Serm. V.*
If God should take us at our word, it would go ill with us. If he should not have washed *Peter*, he should have had no part in *Christ*. *Misericorditer negat*; and, *Audit ad utilitatem, non ad voluntatem*. Of our selves, in these passions, we know not what to ask. *I said in mine haste.*

This inconsiderate and impertinent Motion,

2. It arose out of the ignorance of Understanding, and Humane Apprehension of Heavenly Glory. *Peter* hath here a view and glimpse of it, but yet knows not how to judge and esteem of it. That Spiritual and Heavenly Condition, it is a meer strange thing to us: We apprehend it in our Earthy and Carnal manner, and so talk of it, out of gross apprehensions. *Peter* thinks, three Tabernacles will well suit with three glorious Bodies. The thoughts that we have of those unconceivable joys, are, like our selves, low, and unproportionable. Ask the piercingest judgment, of those After-joys, How must they stammer, and fumble, and bewray Ignorance? If it should be asked,

1. What is that Eternity of Being, which we look for in Heaven? We cannot comprehend it.
2. What are those Heavenly Speeches that Souls and Spirits use in Glory? We cannot conceive them.
3. What is that Impassibility, and Agility of our Bodies in Heaven? We cannot imagine it.
4. What is that Beatifical Vision, and sight of the Essence of God? We cannot attain to it.

As *Christ* to *Nichodemus*, if we cannot understand more Earthly things, as, The work of Grace, Union with *Christ*, The manner of Regeneration; How can we understand him, when he speaks of Heavenly? *O! Eye hath not seen; and that sees far: Ear hath not heard; and that receives much: nay, Heart hath not ability to imagine, or conceive those hidden things.* In this case we are no more able to conceive what that life of Glory is, than a Child in the Womb can conceive what is the condition of this present life. Our discourses of Heaven, are like theirs, who talk of Countries they never saw. Nay, *St. Paul*, who was there, yet found them unutterable. All other knowledge hath some help and hint from Nature; but this is a *Mystery hid from Generations, and Ages*, and lock'd up in that Store-house of Eternity.

This inconsiderate unadvised Motion of *Peter*, *He knew not what he said*,

3. It arose from the surcharge, and over-whelming of this great Glory. The exceeding Glory of *Christ* hath over-whelmed the Soul, and Mind, and Capacity of *Peter*, and overcomes his Understanding. *Excellens objectum corrumpit*. Our Understanding is shallow, limited, finite, proportionable to these lower things; but God, and the fulness of his Glory, are too high for us. As it is with our Brains; be we on the ground, then they are steady; but upon some high Mountain, or Steeple, they fail us. *Bonorum quorundam, sicut & malorum, intolerabilis magnitudo est. Tertul.* Not only the torments of Hell would consume us; but, if God should not put strength into our Souls, the very joys of Heaven would swallow us up. *Stay me with Flagons, comfort me with Apples, for I am sick of Love, Cant. 2. 5.* As we say of crazy bodies, Too pure an Air, and too accurate a Diet will overthrow them: So our crazy Souls are not able to undergo the eminency of that Glory. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it, Psal. 139. 6.* Hence, they say, we must have *Lumen Gloriae confortans, & elevans intellectum*; Our Understandings enlarged, and raised, and strengthened, to undergo that weight of Glory. The Sun puts out a Candle: So, the light of Glory will soon damp our poor glimmering Spark. This makes the very Angels stand aloof, and cover their Faces. *He dwelleth in that light that cannot be approached unto; that light is like the Sun-beams to sore Eyes.* The Queen of *Sheba*, *1. Kings. 10. 5.* was overcome with the sight of *Solomon's* Magnificence; she was spent with admiration, *There was no more Spirit in her.*

We have seen the nature and condition of this Motion, whence it arises.

Serm. V. Secondly, Consider the particular Conviction of this Rashness in *S. Peter*, in the many Particularities of his erroneous Motion. Formerly we have seen what commendable things were contained in this his Suit; but we see it here censured as unadvised and imprudent. Let us review these Motions of *S. Peter*, and see his failings.

I. In his Motion of Continuance: *Master, it is good being here.*

1. The first Errour; *'Tis good being here*: He would fain abide here always: He errs, in desiring a perpetuity of that Condition, which was but transient and momentary. This Vision was but a taste of Glory, but a drop from the Honey-comb, not a full repast of Glory; intended onely to strengthen their Faith, incourage their Diligence, correct their Errour, quicken their Hope; all these Purposes are omitted, and he must not part with this Vision of *Christ*, but must have it perpetual. As *Mary*, she embraceth the Feet of *Christ*, would never have left him: *Christ* bids us leave off, these were but extraordinary Appearances, not to be dwelt upon. Besides the vileness of noisom Lusts, which still would be craving, even the Spirit of Man loves to glut it self in spiritual Refreshments. How loth were the Apostles to part with *Christ's* Bodily Presence? So, in many extraordinary Appearances, which are not intended as perpetual, yet there is *Libido*, and *Luxuria spiritualis*, we would fain enjoy those ravishing Joys which are but for a time. No, as the Angel that refreshed *Elias*, said to him, Feed, and be walking, *thou must live in the strength of it forty days*; it may be, all thy life-time: No, stick to Faith, that's our Ordinary. As *Dives*, who lived deliciously every day; so some Christians, if they be not caught up into Heaven, do not see Visions of Angels, they are discontent.

2. A second Errour is, in that he places the fulness of Joy in the view of the Humanity of *Christ*, but gloriously Transfigured; and can be content never to see more, or go further, but to behold this Glory: True, it is a great accomplishment to our Bliss, to see that Price of our Redemption, the Body of our Saviour, in Glory; but yet it is not the main and original. No Created Glory can be the Fountain and Fulness of Glory to us. Even the Manhood of *Christ* is blessed by derivation, and participation from an higher Fountain: The Society of the Saints is comfortable; the view of that Lamb of God, most ravishing: but yet it is the blessed Godhead, the Face of God himself, the adoring and enjoying an Heavenly Communion with the Sacred Trinity, that is our true, prime, original Happiness. *Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth, Joh. 14. 8.* The increased Glory of *Christ's* Deity, that is the Matter and Sum of our Blessedness, *Joh. 17.* Our Happiness is to behold the Glory which *Christ* had with God, not on Mount *Tabor*, but before the World was. *This is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is Light, 1 Joh. 1. 5.* that we may have fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, *vers. 4.* Our Hearts are restless, till settled upon this. All our Affections are flowing and running, till they are swallowed up in this Ocean. The Eyes of our Body indeed shall have *Christ's* Body as the most glorious Spectacle of all Comfort; but the Eye of our Soul, that goes higher. As the Eye of Faith rests not upon the Humanity of *Christ*, but upon his Divinity, and so on the whole Trinity; so doth the Eye of Beatifical Vision, that succeeds Faith.

3. A third Errour, *'Tis good being here*; He would settle his rest upon Mount *Tabor*: This was an Errour, to bring down Heaven upon Earth. To enjoy *Tabor*, he can be content to part with Heaven, and resign up that Place to enjoy this. Like the two Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*; because the Land on this side *Jordan* was rich and commodious, they beg to be settled there, care not for the Land of Promise. Like some vain Traveller, who can be content to settle in some Inn on the Road, because he finds good usage there, and never hasten on to his own Country, to his own home. Not onely wicked men would fain settle here, but sometimes God's Children could be content with the Life of Grace here, and think not sufficiently of Heaven above. No, we must know, *Tabor* is but a *Viaticum* to Heaven: It is *Manna* indeed, but not for our stay; onely for our

our Journal in the Wilderness. Heaven is the Country, that is the Region and Land of Promise. Grace never leaves us, till it brings us thither: As Waters will ascend as high as from whence they rise; so Grace, that comes from Heaven, and it will thither again. *Jerusalem* is from above; *Tabor* is but a Colony that belongs to it. Serm. V.

4. A fourth Errour, *'Tis good being here*; *Peter* would have *Christ* set up his rest here, and never go down more from Mount *Tabor*: What shall become then of *Christ's* Death, and Passion, and the Redemption of Mankind, by his being Crucified? All our Happiness, this on Mount *Tabor*, that in Heaven, depends all upon this. He hath heard our Saviour forewarn it, yet is he so transported with this passionate Joy, that *Christ* must not suffer now; he must forget his Message, and the Command of his Father, and the Redemption of his Church, to bear *Peter* company upon Mount *Tabor*. Nay, as some conceive, purposely he moves it to *Christ*, and proffers his assistance, that so he may escape the death of the Cross. So carnally, sometimes, are our Affections set, that we think we love *Christ*, and our selves, when we cross him most. No, *Christ* must descend from Mount *Tabor*, and ascend Mount *Calvary*; Thus it is written, that *Christ* must suffer, and so enter into his Glory. How else should the Scripture be fulfilled, the Church redeemed, Heaven purchased, the Devil vanquished? How dangerous are our carnal desires, of what fearful consequence, if God should give way to them?

5. A fifth Errour, *'Tis good being here*; He would never leave this place of Glory, but enter upon the possession of it presently: Ey, but much labour is to be undergone, many Services to be performed, to attain this Rest. No, *Peter* would slip into Heaven in an instant.

Oh! But,

1. *Laborandum*. *Peter* should say, Let us go down, and perform those Conditions of gaining Heaven. We must not so linger for Heaven, as not to be content to take pains for it. The Spies that discovered *Canaan*, came back, and said, Come let us fight for it, it is a good Land.
2. *Prius patiendum*. There is a Cup to be tasted of, and *Baptism* to be baptised with first. Through many afflictions we must enter into Heaven. Fain would we go to Heaven without the Cross, and pass, *a deliciis, ad delicias*: No, we must be made conformable to our Head, who was consecrated by Afflictions. *Crux, scala Cæli*; the Cross is the Ladder by which we must ascend to the Crown.
3. *Moriendum*. We must pass through *Golgotha*, to come up to this Mount. *Peter* indeed, as we all are, was loth to be *unclorbed*; but we would be *cloathed upon*, that mortality may be swallowed up of life, 2 Cor. 5. 4. The Valley of Death leads to this Mountain; That streight must be passed. *Peter*, after, is content to lay down his Tabernacle, here he forgets it. It is the Supper of the Lamb; the Labour of the Day, and the Evening of Death must first come.
6. A sixth Errour, *Good being here*; Fain would he hold *Christ* ever upon Mount *Tabor*. Why, what shall become of all other Saints? *Peter* will engross *Christ* here to himself. *Moses* and *Elias* from Heaven, and three Apostles on Earth, shall enjoy *Christ*, no matter for others, he takes no thought of them: He will deprive Heaven of *Christ*, those in Heaven must go without him. And for the Saints on Earth, he never thinks of them neither, so he may have his full of Glory. Whereas a more advised Spirit would have provoked *Peter* to have been zealous to call in and invite others to the fellowship of these Joys. Indeed, other Worldly Blessings are diminished by many Partakers; but this is more increased. The Lepers, 2 Kings 7. said, *We do not well*, we do not carry Tidings into the City. The Spirit of Piety naturally provokes us to call in others to share in *Christ* with us. The Woman of *Samaria*, Job. 4. 29. calls out all her Neighbours to enjoy *Christ*. Thus *Cornelius* brought in his Kindred, Acts 10. 24. Had *Andrew* served *Peter* thus, what share had he had in *Christ*? He went and found out his

Serm. V. *his Brother Simon, Joh. 1. 41. Peter's Motion would have put this Light of the World under a Bushel. Whereas,*

1. Love to *Christ*, that will enforce us to encrease his Kingdom.
2. Love to our Brethren, that will quicken us up to gain them. *Matthew* calls his Acquaintance to be in *Christ's* Company, *Luke* 5. 29.
3. This will make our selves fuller Partakers of Glory: The more we gain, the more we shall shine. It is a Sowing, and that will end in bringing Sheaves.

Peter should have been content to have parted with this Glory for a time, for the conversion and good of others. When God bids *Moses* go down from the Mount for the Peoples cause, *Moses* saith not, 'Tis good being here. *S. Paul* knew what the Joys of Heaven were; yet, for the Churches sake, he was not only content to be out of Heaven some time, but *Anathema* for ever. *Domine, si adhuc populo tuo sum necessarius, non recuso laborem, fiat voluntas tua; desiderio requiem, sed non recuso laborem.* So said *S. Martin* in *S. Bernard*.

We have seen *Peter's* Errours in his Motion for Continuance: Now let us see what Failings there were,

II. In his Proffer of building *Tabernacles*. In it, *He knew not what he said*. That Proffer hath Blemishes and Imperfections.

1. Being here, as he supposes, in *Christ's* Kingdom of Glory, he forecasts an erection of three *Tabernacles*; One for *Christ*, one for *Moses*, one for *Elias*. *Christ* here hath his Family, and *Moses* his, and *Elias* his. Whereas *Christ's* *Tabernacle* and Church being erected, *Moses* and *Elias* must not persist: All must be in *Christ's* *Tabernacle*, or utterly excluded. *Elias* must have a distinct *Tabernacle* from *Moses*, till *Christ* comes and pitches his *Tabernacle* among Men; but then they must resign and give place to him. *Unum ovile*, all must be under one Head; all one Flock, and one Shepherd. No man must *ducere familiam*, be the Master of the House, but onely *Christ*; all must come in, and hide themselves in *Christ's* *Pavilion*. Thus the *Corinthians*, they would build many *Tabernacles*: One sets up a *Tabernacle* for *Cephas*, another for *Paul*, another *Tabernacle* for *Apollo*. *Paul* flings down these *Tabernacles*, sets up *Christ's* onely. In the *New Jerusalem* there is no *Temple*, but the *Lamb* is the *Temple*, *Rev.* 21. 22. Who is *Moses*, and who is *Elias*, but Servants of this *Tabernacle*, of which *Christ* is Lord? We must not have not only *Altare contra Altare*; but not *Altare cum Altari*. *Christ* alone is the Lord, all the rest are but Servants.

2. A second Errour; *Moses* and *Elias* must needs have *Tabernacles*, and abide with *Christ*, to make up this Glory. Why? *Christ* alone, and his *Tabernacle*, cannot that suffice us? It is an Errour, so to affect the presence of the Saints, as to account *Christ* an imperfect Saviour, if they be wanting; or our Happiness insufficient, if Saints be not joyned with him. 'Tis comfortable to have the Society of the Saints; but, in point of Salvation hereafter, or Comfort here, we must know, he is alone *All-sufficient* for us. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? Nihil, Domine, præter te ipsum.* In this case, though *Abraham* know us not, and *Jacob* be ignorant of us, and *Moses* and *Elias* they abide not; *Tet thou art the same, Lord, thou never failest.* The Court is where the King is, though none of his Followers attend upon him. If *Christ* be not thine, and vouchsafes his Presence, all the Saints and Angels in Heaven cannot comfort thee: If thou hast him, were they all Strangers to thee, thou hast fulness of Blis in him only. The Sun alone is more refreshing, than all the Stars in the Firmament.

3. A third Errour; *Peter* will set up three *Tabernacles*; One for *Christ*, then for *Moses*, then for *Elias*. *Christ*, indeed, is first named; but here is too much equallizing the Servants with the Master. *Nimis perversum quod Mosen & Eliam Collegas Christo facit, cum omnes in ordinem cogendi, ut ille solus emineat.* It is too Fellow-like a Provision, to sort *Christ* and Saints in such *Tabernacles* of equality: *All Sheaves must fall down and worship this Sheaf.* All Saints must do homage, and stoop; and not state it in several Courts and Quarters, as petty *Christs*. No, *Christ's* Footstool is a glorious Throne for the highest Saints.

Maldonate

Maldonate the Jesuit upbraids *Calvin* with making this Construction of *Peter's* *Serm. V.* good meaning. But *Calvin* is not the first: His own Cardinal, *Turrecremate*, conceits it before him. How hath that Church pitch'd Tabernacles check-mate with *Christ's*? The Virgin *Mary's* Tabernacle is more frequented. There must be a Writ of Command from this to *Christ's*. What *Peter* did in an astonishment and incogitancy, these do wilfully and wickedly; paralleling Saints with *Christ*, the Law with the Gospel, Servants of the House with the Lord of it. Three Churches there are built on *Tabor*, and a Monastery.

4. A fourth Errour; *Christ*, and *Moses*, and *Elias*, in Glory, must have three Tabernacles. A strange weakness of this holy Man! What use have glorified Bodies of these Tabernacles made with Hands? Indeed, the Feast of Tabernacles was a Type of our Heavenly Joy; but a poor Shadow only. A Tabernacle, it was a Travellers Habitation; their Journey being past, that was a refreshing; their Toils over, that was a Shelter. It was a Military Habitation; their Warfare past, that was their Covert. But there is no Tabernacle in Heaven: As *Moses* himself confesses, *Psal. 90. Lord, thou art our dwelling-place.*

The Carnal thoughts of Men think these Earthly Comforts to have place in Heaven. As the *Sadduces* thought, If there be a Resurrection, then there is Marrying, and giving in Marriage: So the *Jews* thought, That if the *Messias* be, then there must be Carnal Victory, Worldly Pomp. So the *Turks* promise themselves Sensual Delights. In this sense it is true, *The Kingdom of Heaven is not meat, nor drink, nor any such comfort; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* We look for a Tabernacle and Building made without Hands. Those Eternal Mansions, whose Foundations are *Eternity*, and whose Walls are *Salvation*, need not our poor Cottages.



O N

The Transfiguration.

The Sixth Sermon.

S. Matth. XVII. 5.

While he yet spake, behold a bright Cloud overshadowed them, and behold a voice out of the Cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.



WE have seen the Progress of this glorious Appearance of *Christ*, hitherto,

First, In his holy Preparation, *He prayed.*

Secondly, In his glorious Transfiguration of his Body.

Thirdly, In his honourable Attendance of *Moses* and *Elias.*

Fourthly, In the ravishing and ecstatical Contemplation of his Apostles. Now,

Fifthly, We come to the highest pitch and rise of Glory put upon him by God, and unto which all the rest were subordinate and purposed; the great Glory and Honour put upon him from Heaven, by God the Father, in this magnificent and renowned Testimony, *This is my beloved Son.*

As,

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As, when *Nathan* and *Zadock* had attended *Solomon* to *Gihon*, and there invested him in the Title of the Kingdom with Applause and Shouting, then *David* his Father gives him the solemn Consummation, in placing him upon his own Royal Throne, and establishing his Succession by his own Approbation : So here, *Moses* and *Elias* having adored him on Mount *Taber*, now God the Father seals up his Glory. Go forth, O ye Daughters of *Zion*, and behold King *Solomon*, with the Crown wherewith his Mother crowned him, Cant. 3. 11. This *David* spake of, Psal. 2. 6. I have set my King upon my holy Hill of *Zion*. Ver. 7. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

Three times we see this glorious Voice came from Heaven, to magnifie *Christ* :

1. In his entrance, and initiation of his Mediatorship, when he was baptised by *John*, then lo a Voice from Heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*, Matth. 3. 17.
2. Here, in the course and progress of his Mediatorship.
3. At the end and closure of it, before his Passion ; Then came there a Voice from Heaven, saying, *I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

Now in this glorious Testimony given to our Saviour here in the Text, there are two things.

1. Is a fitting and significant Accommodation and Preparation for it, *A bright Cloud overshadowed them.*
2. Is the Publication and Declaration of this glorious Testimony, *This is my beloved Son.*

First, Is the Preparation, *A bright Cloud overshadowed them.*

1. *A Cloud overshadowed them.* The over-spreading of this Cloud upon our Saviour and the Apostles, was purposed of God, for divers Reasons :

1. To correct the Errour of *Peter* : He would prepare Tabernacles to shelter *Christ*, and those glorified Bodies ; as supposing that those glorified Bodies had need of Shelter and Coverture. God confutes this Errour : Here is an Over-shadowing and Shelter from Heaven ; not a Booth, or a Tent pitch'd by Man, but framed by God ; an Heavenly Cloathing, miraculously framed. As *David* speaks, *He lays the Beams of his Chambers in the Waters, and makes the Clouds his Chariot*, Psal. 104. 3. He clothes himself with this Aery, or rather Heavenly Mansion. Thus *Solomon*, *The Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him*, 2 Chron. 2. 6. *He hath said, he will dwell in the thick Cloud*, 1 Kings 8. Tabernacles, and such poor earthly Helps, suit with our Frailty ; his Glory can erect a more wonderful Pavilion.

2. To allay and moderate the Lustre and Resplendency of that great Glory. This Transfiguration and Glory of *Christ* hath overcome *S. Peter*, he is not able to stand before the brightness of it, he was swallowed up with it. See here, God attempers himself to their Weakness, abates of that Majesty, and spreads a Pavilion and Shade of Clouds, to shelter them from the surcharge of Glory, that was too great for them. As *Moses* put a Vail on his Face, that he might not amaze and terrifie his People. As we cannot look upon the Sun in its full brightness, but under a Cloud, by Refraction or Reflexion ; so the Majesty of *Christ* is unsupportable, till he vails himself, and abates his Glory, and condescends to our frail Capacity.

3. A Cloud overcasts and overshadows them, to hinder their further prying and looking into that Glory. He gives them a glimpse of Glory, but overcasts it presently. We must not search too far, look too much into that Majesty. Our Curiosity would still be gazing and prying, till God darkens himself, and closes our sight from further beholding. When the men of *Galilee* stood gazing up into Heaven after *Christ*, when he was taken up into Heaven, *A Cloud received him out of their sight*, Acts 1. 9. Thus God curbs our bold Approaches to his Presence. *Moses* would see the Face of God, God shews him his Back-parts, but hides his Countenance. When he appear'd on *Sinai*, he set Bounds to the People. *Tutum est nescire, quod non licet scire.* Thus the Temple was framed ; the People were restrained to the outermost Court, the Priests to the inward ; but there

was

was a Vail before the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, *Psal.* 18. 11. He made darkness his secret place; his Pavilion round about him, were dark Waters, and thick Clouds of the Skies. Thus he doth ;

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1. To strike reverence, and awe into us: The unsearchableness of Gods mysteries, and our inability to view and comprehend them, are purposed to work admiration, and adoration in us.
2. *Ut sit locus Fidei.* God suffers not our Eyes to behold his full Majesty, and those Heavenly mysteries, to exercise our Faith, in believing what we see not. In extraordinary cases he shines more clearly; but in ordinary, he holds us to the dim light of Faith. The *Israelites*, in the Night, had a Pillar of Fire; but in the day, a Pillar of Cloud. Hence we are said, to walk by Faith, and not by Sight. *Christiani non rationales, sed fideles.* It is the goodness of Faith, *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed; Job.* 20. 29.
3. *Ut sit locus Expectationi.* We must not see that Glory now, but expect it hereafter. As in the Primitive Church, the *Catechumeni* were not suffered to see *Baptism*, or the *Eucharist*, the more to quicken their desires after them; so God casts a Cloud before his Glory, to make us long for that time, when these Clouds shall vanish, and we behold him Face to Face. As *David* admitting *Abshalom* to *Jerusalem*, but forbidding his coming to his presence, provoked him to long to see the King's face.
4. To withdraw, and separate *Moses* and *Elias* from them. *Peter* lingered, and sued for a stay; no, a Cloud is cast 'twixt him and them. It is our condition; we may, and naturally we do linger after the Society of the Saints, still to retain them with us; no, God withdraws them, and casts a Cloud of separation and concealment, that they are not to be seen again; all further conversation with them is denied to us. Papists, they keep the passage open, betwixt us and the Departed; they pray to them, and for them; and tell us of their frequent Apparitions. No, our Religion sees a Cloud cast betwixt us, God hides them in his Pavilion. As *Christ* was caught out of sight with a Cloud; so are we hindered from any further conversation with Saints departed. Happy they who are taken from us, as *Moses* and *Elias*, on Mount *Tabor*, in *Christ's* presence, and caught up in a bright Cloud of Comfort.
5. A Cloud appears and overshadows them, as a Symbol and Token of God the Father's presence. Usually God's presence was represented by a Cloud. Thus he filled the Temple with a Cloud, *1 Kings* 8. So *Exod.* 19. A Cloud appeared upon Mount *Sinai*, *Numb.* 12. 5. He came down, and a Pillar of Cloud appeared on the Tabernacle.

Now this representation of the Father in a Cloud implies two things:

1. *Patris Invisibilitatem.* He dwells in a thick Cloud; that is, his Nature and Substance; it is hidden, and invisible. This is a glorious Attribute of God. *St. Paul* calls him, *The Invisible God*, *Col.* 1. 15.

1. He is Invisible to the eye of the Body: That Spiritual Nature cannot be looked upon by the Eye of any Creature. *No man hath seen God at any time, Joh.* 1. 18. *Exod.* 33. 20. *Thou canst not see my face. He dwells in the Light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see, 1 Tim.* 6. 16.

2. He is Invisible by the eye of Reason, the eye of the Soul. The reach of Reason and Understanding cannot comprehend him; No Definition can express him; No Notion resemble him; No Understanding fathom him. All the ways that Reason hath to know him are but three, and they all fall short.

1. *Via Causalitatis:* Yet that is unsufficient; he not communicating his whole being, or Substance, to any Creatures. They are *Vestigia*, but not, *Plena, & adæquata.*
2. *Via Negationis:* Removing all imperfections from him; yet that shews what he is not, not what he is.
3. *Via eminentie:* By ascribing all created Excellencies, and reducing them to him; yet these are but similitudes of him, not really true

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of him: Then, these are finite, and we are not able to conceive Infinity.

3. He is invisible to the Eye of Grace. That's the Apprehension of Faith, and goes beyond Sense or Reason; apprehends great things: but yet it cannot attain to the seeing of God. Faith rather leans on him, than looks on him. It knows him in his Attributes, Word, Promises, Inspirations, Feelings of Grace: but himself it sees not; he is still in the Cloud.

4. Invisible, because God the Father never was Visible by any Apparition. The Son, he is *God manifested in the Flesh*: The Holy Ghost, he appeared in the shape of a *Dove*, and *Cloven Tongues*: But the First Person never made himself known by any visible Apparition: Hence it is, that the Fathers conclude, That in the Old Testament, whensoever it is said that God appeared, as to *Adam*, *Abraham*, *Jacob*, &c. still it was the Son who appeared; and those assumed Bodies were *Præludia Incarnationis*.

2. It represents *Possibilitatem Manifestationis*. Still he dwells in the Cloud. A Cloud, it is obscure; but yet it is vanishing, it may be dispelled. The Sun is able to clear the Heaven of Clouds: So, that Invisibility of God, it is but for this Life; a time shall come, when we shall have all Vails removed, all Obscurities lightned, all Clouds dispelled. The Sun of Righteousness shining, shall scatter this Mist; *Then we shall see him as he is. In Lumine tuo, videbimus Lumen*. The Essence of Blessedness, is this Beatifical Vision of God.

That's the first; A Cloud it was that overshadowed them.

II. It was *Nubes lucida, A bright Cloud*. That imports two things:

1. *Evangelii claritatem*; the Light and Clearness that is in the Gospel. When the Law was given to *Moses*, there were thick dark Clouds, the Mount was all overcast with Smoke. Here, on Mount *Tabor*, there was a Cloud, but bright and lightsom. Oh! The Law, and the Means of Salvation in it, were dark and obscure, and very reserved, in regard of the shining Light the Gospel brings. The Law, that is a Cloud, dark and obscure; but the Gospel, that is a clear Cloud. Still, indeed, the Gospel is a Cloud, it gives no full evident view; but yet it is a clear Cloud, it hath many rays, and beams of light in it. The Law had a dark Cloud, we could not see through it; their shadows were remote and obscure. Their Circumcision was a dark Cloud, immediately signifying Gods Covenant with *Abraham*. Our Baptism is a Cloud, a bodily material Type, an outward Element; but 'tis a clear Cloud, representing distinctly, the washing away the filth of the flesh, by the Blood of *Christ*. Their Passover was a dark Cloud, representing their delivery out of *Egypt*, immediately; but darkly, the *Messias*: Our Lords Supper is a Cloud, a Vail of Bread and Wine is over it, but yet it is a clear Cloud; immediately shewing *Christ*, and all his benefits. Their Covenant was a Cloud, covered with temporary Promises, with the Promise of *Canaan*: Ours is a Cloud indeed, we cannot see those things that it promises; but yet a clear Cloud, immediately presenting to us immediate Promises of Heaven. The light of the Law, was like the light of a Candle; Ours, as the Day-Star.

2. *Pacis serenitatem*: A bright Cloud overshadowed them; signifying Cheerfulness and Serenity. The Cloud of *Sinai*, was not so much *Nubes*, as *Nimbus*, full of storms and tempests, thundrings and lightnings. That Cloud kindled Coals of Fire, it was exceeding terrible: but the Cloud on Mount *Tabor*, 'tis a bright Cloud, the emblem of Calmness and Serenity. Thus the Gospel, it is all peace and comfort. Mount *Sinai* denounced Cursings; *Christ*, on the Mount, begins with Blessing, *Matth. 5. You are not come to the Mountain that burned with fire*; but to the Mountain of Olives, yielding peace and security. *Moses* his Mountain was like to Mount *Ebal*, nothing but Cursings; but *Christ* is on Mount *Gerazim*, nothing but Blessings. 'Tis called *An overshadowing Cloud*, that is, comforting, refreshing, sheltring. *Mons Legis, tumens*; *Mons Christi, exultans*; full of exultations, and rejoycings.

Now follows,

Secondly, The solemn publication of this Testimony. Two things in it:

1. The Manner of Expression, 'tis *Vox à Nube*; *A Voice out of the Cloud*.

2. The

2. The Matter and Sum of it; *Hic est Filius meus dilectus, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Serm. VI.

First, The Manner of Expression; *A Voice came out of the Cloud.* I told you before, the Cloud betoken'd the Presence of the Father: see now the Manifestation of him; it is, *per Vocem è Nube.*

1. It is, *Vox è Nube*; a Voice out of the Cloud. 'Tis the Observation that *Moses* makes of God's speaking out of the Cloud, *Ye heard a Voice.* *A visis, remittit ad audita.* First, they had Representations to their Eyes, *They saw his Glory*; now he recalls them to the Ear, *to hear a Voice.* Thus he furnished both the disciplinable Senses, Eyes and Ears; *As we have Heard, so have we Seen.* Thus in the Church, we have *Verbum Audibile*, and *Verbum Visibile*, Helps for both Eyes and Ears. *What we have Heard, and Seen, and Felt,* saith *S. John.*

2. *Vox à Nube, à Visis ad Audita*; He recalls them from extraordinary Visions, to the Hearing of the Ear. That is the saving Sense: The Sense of greatest Discipline, saith Reason; the Sense of Faith, saith Religion. Popery is a Religion for the Eye; Ours, for the Ear. A Christian is described, *In auditu Auris*; At the Hearing of the Ear they shall obey. Hearing it is that breeds Faith. It is a comfort to have these Visions, Tastings, Feelings; but if all these fail us, or be denied us, yet if we can Hear, and Believe, it sufficeth. We must stick to this. In this sense, *All the Body must be an Ear.* *Miracula, muta sine voce*; but Seals to a Blank.

3. *Vox è Nube*; This Testimony of *Christ* comes out of the Cloud from God the Father: It implies three Excellencies in this Revelation;

1. 'Tis *Vox è Nube*; It is, *Supernaturalis Revelationis*; It is sent and discovered to us by extraordinary Revelation. The Knowledge of *Christ*, and the Mysteries of his Kingdom, 'tis not inbred, or to be obtained here below, by Natural means; but must come by Revelation, and from above; *A Patre luminum, from the Father of lights.* *Lux, à primo lucido.* The way of this Wisdom, is, by natural Reason, past finding out; 'Tis a Path which no Fowl knoweth, and which the Vultures Eye hath not seen, *Job 28. 7.* The Sun cannot be seen but by its own Light; nor can *Christ* be known, but by his own Revelation. See how *Christ* poses and catechises his Apostles; *Whom do men say that I am?* *Matth. 16. 13.* See how distracted they are in their Opinions; Some say, *Elias*; some, *John the Baptist*; some, *Jeremias*, or one of the Prophets; roving, and guessing, and all mistaking. But whom say ye that I am? *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.* *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it, but my Father which is in Heaven.* The Knowledge of *Christ*, it is an unsearchable Mystery; secret, and laid up in the Bosom of Eternity. Which if it be; then,

1. It is made known, *Ad placitum.*

2. It is dispensative; As much as he pleaseth.

3. It is out of special favour. Secret things, to secret ones.

2. 'Tis *Vox è Nube*; It is *Supremæ Authoritatis*; It is a Testimony of the highest and most Sovereign Authority. It comes from the Excellent Glory, as *S. Peter* speaks, *2 Pet. 1. 17.* The Testimonies of Men may be questioned; but God's Warrant from Heaven is past exception. The Pharisees demanded a Testimony from Heaven, and then they would yield. All Religions would pretend their Original from Heaven; Ours is so, without controversy.

1. It is the Confirmation of our Faith, as *S. Peter* speaks, *2 Pet. 1. 16.* *We have not followed cunningly devised Fables, in preaching of Christ to you: No, This Voice came from Heaven to us: Shew us the Father, Lord, and it suffices: Let us hear his Voice.* Here we have it, and it must command the Obedience of our Faith, to yield and embrace it.

2. It is the great Conviction of the Worlds Infidelity: *Had I not spoken to them, they had had no sin; but now they have heard, therefore their sin abides.* Thus *Christ* convinces the Pharisees; *The Baptism of John,*

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was it from Heaven, or from men? Their Consciences told them, *If we say, From Heaven; Why did we not believe him? Take heed ye despise not him that speaks from Heaven.* To despise the Testimony of Men, of Prophets, of Messengers, went not unpunished. *If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. He that believes not God, hath made him a liar; because he believes not the Record God gave of his Son,* 1 Joh. 5. 10. A liar! Luther saith, It is the greatest Opprobry, of the greatest Provocation. Call a man Cruel, Unmerciful, or Proud, or Covetous, the Blood riseth not so much, as when you call him a Liar. How must God be provoked, when we give the Lie to his Truth, question his Son, authorised by his own Seal? Unbelief gives God the Lie.

3. This Testimony from Heaven, it seals up our Condemnation, if it be rejected; it makes an Unbelievers Damnation most confessedly just, beyond all exception. God hath sent his Son, and testified of him, that in him he offers Grace and Reconciliation. What can we plead, if upon rejecting this Testimony we be condemned? People that live out of the Pale of the Church, where this Testimony is recorded, are like Men that live in an unwholesom Air, and far from Physicians; when they fall sick, there is but one way with them. But see, here is Balm in Gilead; a Physician is here, make use of him then, or you perish wilfully. Such judge themselves unworthy of Eternal Life, Acts 13. 46. forsake their own Mercies. Hence we see, Christ refers it to themselves, to judge what they deserve for refusing of Christ. Matth. 21. 40. Ask them, *What will the Lord of the Vineyard do unto those Husbandmen which reject his Son?* They all answered, *He will miserably destroy those wicked men;* Their damnation is just, themselves being Judges.

Enough for the Manner of Expression; *A Voice out of the Cloud:* Come we now,

Secondly, To the Matter and Sum of it: What doth God publish? What hidden mystery doth he disclose? Even the highest Mystery of Heaven, That Christ is Mediator. This, 'tis the prop of our Faith; 'tis the tydings of Angels; nay 'tis the Voice of God himself. We count it a common vulgar Truth. What, Catechise you about Christ? Ask who he was? We wrong you. Oh, saith S. Ambrose, *Non solum incipientum, sed & perfectorum; imo cœlestium, notitia Filii Dei.*

Now, in this Testimony, observe two things:

1. A special Designation, *Hic est; This is.*
2. A special Description; *My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

First, Here is a special Designation; *This is my beloved Son.* In it there is a threefold force;

1. It is *Vox demonstrativa*; A personal pointing out of our Saviour; *This is he.* Before, the Patriarchs believed *In confuso*; in more general terms, as the Promises were propounded;

1. *Semen Mulieris*, to Adam; *The Seed of the Woman*: then,
2. *Semen Abrahamæ*, to Abraham; *Thy Seed*: then,
3. *Semen Davidis*, to David; then,
4. *Semen Virginis*; All came nearer and nearer, but yet they never enjoyed a personal Evidence and demonstration of Christ. But this Testimony singles him out, and points out his Person. If now they shall say, *Here is Christ;* or, *There is Christ;* look not after him. We know him personally, *Jesus of Nazareth*: We have the concurrence of all the specialities and circumstances to fasten our Faith upon him with all certainty. And this assurance is required of Christians; not only to believe in the *Messias*; but, that *Jesus is Christ.*

2. 'Tis *Vox exhibitiva*, A Voice betokening an actual, and real, and present Exhibition. The Church, before Christ, was supported with Promises; *He shall come;* *He shall be born in the fulness of time;* *I shall see him, but not yet,* saith Balaam.

The

The Saints before *Christ*, were all in reverſions, and expectations; *They waited for this Conſolation; They received not the Promiſes*: But now, the Father brings him into the World; the Goſpel preſents him to the Eye of your Faith. They before us, lived upon Promiſes; but here is the advantage, and excellency of our ſtate, we live upon Performances. Theirs was, *Gaudium quærentium*, ours, *Invenientium*. They were in a ſtate of Expectation; we in a ſtate of Fruition: They ſaluted the Promiſes afar off; we poſſeſs and embrace them. The ſtretchings out of their Faith, are nothing ſo comfortable as the embracing of ours.

3. 'Tis *Vox diſtinctiva*; It ſingles out *Chriſt*, and ſeparates him from the reſt. *Moses*, indeed, was a glorious Saint; *Elias*, a great Prophet; the *Baptiſt* was much admired of the People; they ſuppoſed he was *Chriſt*; but ſtill but Servants: *Chriſt* is the Son. To which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, *Thou art my Son*? This is the grand Prerogative of *Chriſt*. All Excellencies are but ſerviceable to him. Let us honour *Moses*, and *Elias*, and other Saints; and reverence them ſo, as that we forget not they be Servants, and remember who is the Son; let us adore him. He is the King of Saints. Purpoſely the Apoſtles are recall'd from thoughts of *Moses* and *Elias*; Why linger ye after them? Here is the Prince of your Salvation. That's the designation.

Come we,

Secondly, To the Deſcription. In it three things;

1. The Dignity of his Perſon.
2. The Excellency of his Mediation.
3. The Authority of his Doctrine.

First, The Dignity of his Perſon.

1. He is *Filius*, a Son.
2. He is *Filius dilectus*, a beloved Son.

1. He is *Filius*; The Son of God; *Pſal. 2. Thou art my Son*: This is the Foundation of the Church, that *Chriſt* is the Son of God: This the Devils acknowledge, *Thou art the Son of God*. And that implies theſe Truths:

1. *Filius, ergo ejusdem Naturæ*. The Creator, and the Creature, they are not of the ſame nature; nor the Workman, and his Work: but the Father and the Son are of the ſame nature. Man begets a Man, not one of another kind; and God begets God. *Thou art my Son; hodie genui. Vera Divinitas, quia vera de Deo natiuitas*, ſaith *Fulgentius*.

2. *Filius, ergo diſtincta Perſona*. The Son is a diſtinct Perſon, and Subſiſtence from the Father. He is not a Property, or Attribute in God, or a Maniſteſtation of him; but a true, real Perſon, ſubſiſting in himſelf.

3. *Filius, ergo paris Dignitatis*;

1. *Ejusdem Excellentie*; He counts it no robbery to be equal with God; He is high in the glory of the Father, placed, *ad dextram*, at his right hand.
2. *Capax ejusdem cultus*; He is to be worſhipp'd with equal honour, as his Father is: All Knees muſt bow to Him, all Tongues confeſs Him. All muſt honour the Son, as they honour the Father.
3. *Ejusdem Potestatis*; He is of equal Power and Authority with his Father. *De Domino natus eſt Dominus, hæres omnium*. All Power in Heaven and in Earth belongs to him; He is Heir of all.

But is *Chriſt* God's Son?

1. It is *Argumentum Amoris, dare Filium*; An Argument of God's great love to Mankind, in that he would beſtow him upon us. God tried *Abraham's* love, by requiring the Sacrificing of his Son.
2. It is *Fundamentum Meriti*; From this, That *Chriſt* is the Son of God, is the Excellency of his Merit: That he could vanquiſh Satan, abolish Sin, purchaſe Salvation; it was not becauſe he was *Filius Mariæ*, but *Filius Dei*; and ſo his Acts are *Inſiniti valoris*, and himſelf the *Univerſale principium gratiæ*.

3. It

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30. It is *Testimonium gratuita Adoptionis*. Is Christ God's Son? What need had God then to adopt us to be his Sons? Adoption is an help in Law, to supply Nature; either when there is not *Filius*, or not *Dilectus Filius*, or *Mortalis Filius*: But all these were prevented in Christ. Yet God adopted us, not that he wanted a Son, but that we wanted a Father. He made us accepted in his Well-beloved.

That's the first, He is *Filius*, A Son.

2. He is *dilectus Filius*, A beloved Son: He was typified by Isaac, the Son of Abraham's love; by Solomon, called *Jedidiah*; beloved of God. What, my Son? and what, the Son of my Womb? and what, the Son of my Vows? So Christ, He was a beloved Son.

There are three things that make a Son beloved of his Father; and all eminently in Christ.

1. Is *Proprietas*; The Son is the Possession of his Father; as Eve called Cain, A Possession. *Filius aliquid Patris, decusum naturæ*; The Father hath communicated himself to his Child; and that makes him to love him. Much more doth God love his Son upon this ground; He is not *aliquid Patris*, but *totum*.

2. Is *Similitudo*; That's *causa Amoris*; The Father imprints his likeness on his Son; In his own likeness he begat him: So Christ is the lively Image of his Father;

1. In his Divinity; He is the Character of his Father's Glory, a full representation of him. *If you knew me, you would know the Father*.

2. In his Humanity; all those created, and infused Graces that are in the Manhood of Christ, they are prints of Gods Wisdom, Holiness, Mercy, &c. shining in him.

3. Is *Conformitas in voluntate*; That breeds love, *idem velle, & idem nolle*. Christ is a Son, who never displeased his Father; there is no repugnancy in his Will to God. He lost his Life, rather than he would lose his Obedience. No marvel then, though the Father stile him his beloved Son. And there are three Evidences of his loving of him:

1. *Circumcessio*; *mercenon*; He is in the Father, and the Father is in him, *Joh. 14. 11*.

2. *Communio consiliorum*; He lies in the Bosom of the Father, and he communicates his Counsels to him, and shews him all things.

3. *Communicatio bonorum*; He hath made him Heir of all things. *Psal. 2. 8. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the Earth for thy possession. Luk. 22. 29. I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.*

That's the first, the Dignity of his Person: Now follows,

Secondly, The Excellency of his Mediation; *In whom I am well pleased*. This is considerable two ways;

1. As a Qualification of his Person; God is highly pleased with Christ.

2. As the Virtue, and Fruit of his Mediation; In whom he is pleased with us.

First, Consider it is a Qualification of his Person. The Person of Christ was most amiable, and acceptable, and gracious in the Eyes of his Father. Thus *Esay* describes him; *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth. Isa. 42. 1.* and it is repeated, *Matth. 12. 18.*

Christ was most pleasing to God the Father;

1. In respect of his infinite Excellency and Goodness. His Divine Nature infinitely answers to the Will of God: In it there is all holiness, and purity, and goodness, exactly answerable and equal to the purity of God the Father. Finite goodness procures finite love; but Christ's infinite Excellency, is infinitely delightful to his Father. Thus he rejoiced with him, and in him, from all Eternity. This blessed Communion 'twixt the Father and the Son, it took up that Incomprehensible

fible space of Eternity. It answers to that Atheistical Quere, *What did God before he made the World?* He enjoyed his own Glory, and Blessedness; and his Soul delighted in this Son of his desires, and love, *Prov. 8. 30.* Serm. VI.

2. God was well pleased in *Christ*, as he was in the state of his Incarnation, as God-man; so God was highly pleased with his Son. In the Creation, God was pleased with all his works; he beheld them, and they were all good. *The Lord rejoiced in his Works, Psal. 104.* But *Christ*, Incarnate is the choice Master-piece of all the works of God. In him, he hath magnified all his glorious Attributes; the greatest Wisdom, the greatest Evidence of Power, the greatest Communication of his Goodness, all were discovered in this work.

There are divers Degrees of Gods Communicating his Goodness:

1. In Creation, he communicates the Goodness of Being; when he brings forth a Creature out of the dark Dungeon of nothing, and makes it subsist.
2. He more communicates his Goodness, in communicating Life, a ray of his Life, to Creatures living.
3. He more communicates his Goodness, by imparting the choice Similitude of himself to man: That much pleas'd him, as the chief of all the ways of God: which makes *David* wonder, *Lord! what is Man?* So, *Psal. 104.* surveying all the Creatures, when he comes to Man, *vers. 23, 24.* then he wonders, *O Lord, how manifold are thy Works?*
4. Yet he more communicates his Goodness, in the Production of Grace, in the Infusion of Holiness; by it he makes us partakers of the Divine Nature. That is a glorious piece of his Workmanship. And he more rejoices in one sanctified Soul, than in all other Creatures in Heaven, or Earth. But,
5. The greatest, and most glorious communication, is of himself in the Incarnation; to make a Creature to be God, by Personal Union. This is the most Incomparable work of God: This, all the Angels wonder at. If at the Creation of Light, all the Angels of God shouted for joy, and admiration, as *Job* speaks; sure, when this work was achieved, then all Creatures did wonder much more. And in this God was highly pleased.

3. God was well pleased in *Christ*, in respect of his perfect and compleat Righteousness. All that our Saviour ever did, did highly content and please him. The best of all the Saints have their failings, and imperfections. *He found folly in his Angels:* In the best of them there is matter of displeasure. But for this Son of God, *There was no guile found in his mouth.* There was in him, exact Purity of Nature, without stain, or blemish. *The Prince of this World cometh, and he hath nothing in me, Job. 14. 30.* that he can search out, and accuse me for. As the Son in the Gospel, he can say truly to his Father, *I have served thee always; I never offended thee.* It was his meat and drink to obey him. He was holy, harmless, separate from sinners, *Heb. 7. 26.*

Secondly, Consider this, in respect of the Virtue of his Mediation. In him, he is well pleased with us also.

Conceive this point;

1. By way of Negation: In *Christ*, God is well pleased with us; therefore, out of *Christ*, he is offended, and displeased with us.
2. By way of Affirmation: In *Christ*, God is well pleased; In him he is graciously appeased, and reconciled with us.

First, Conceive it by way of Negation: Out of *Christ*, God is offended, and displeased with us.

Take a double measure, and proportion of this Displeasure;

1. Is *Mensura Intensionis*; the depth of his Displeasure. The Scripture sets it out in many gradual Expressions:

1. Is *Alienatio*; he is estranged from us; we are cast out of his Covenant. His favour is withdrawn, we are cast away from his Countenance: As *Cain*,

Gen. 4. 14.

Serm. VI. Gen. 4. 14. He was driven away from the face of God. We are Strangers, and a far off from him, Ephes. 2. He beholds us afar off, as one that owns us not.

2. Is *Pœnitentia*; The Scripture sets out his Displeasure at us, by attributing to God a Repentance that ever he made us. Gen. 6. 6. *It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the Earth, and it grieved him at his Heart.* Not that God really repenteth; For he is not as man, that he should repent, 1 Sam. 15. 29. but he hath no more content in us, than a Man hath in that which he repents of, and wilhes were undone.

3. Is *Ira*; In him, are thoughts of wrath and indignation against us; a bent, and purpose of will to punish, and afflict, and make us smart in his Displeasure. In him is wrath, and jealousy, and fury, and storms of Displeasure; and we are *Children of Wrath, Vessels of Wrath*, into which he pours out his anger.

4. Is *Odium*? Hatred, that is deeper. Anger may be suddenly up, and soon pacified; but his Displeasure against us, out of *Christ*, it is Hatred, that's deep, and deadly, and lasting; it looks at Destruction. Every punishment doth not content Hatred, but it aims at Perdition.

5. Is *Abominatio*; That is more than hatred. It carries with it a secret antipathy, and loathing of us; his Soul abhors us. *The wicked are an abomination to the Lord.* His Eyes cannot behold us; he abhors to look upon iniquity.

6. Is *Gaudium in Perditione*; The Scripture goes thus high: The Lord even rejoiceth in his Justice, triumphing over sinners in their Perdition. *Ab! I will ease me of mine Adversaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies,* Isa. 1. 24. Prov. 1. 26. *I will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh.*

That's the first, *Mensura Intensionis*; The other,

1. Is *Mensura Extensionis*; The Measure of Gods Extending this Displeasure. It is observable in three Manifestations of it;

1. It is Universal, with our whole Nature. He is not displeased with some few only, but with Root and Branch, Stock and Fruit. The whole Generation of Mankind is displeasing to him. Not only some few notorious wretches, as *Cain*, and *Esaú*, &c. but even the most moderate restrained men (if there be nothing but Nature in them) they are all out of favour; All of us are *Children of wrath as well as others*, Ephes. 2. 3. *The best of them is a Briar*, Micah. 7. 4. *The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the Children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are altogether become filthy, there is none that doth good, no not one. All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,* Rom. 1. 23. Now antipathy is universal, 'tis to all of the same kind. The Lamb hates every Wolf.

2. It is respectively to all, even our best services and performances. Out of *Christ*, God refuseth all, counts them all abominable. Nay, our Incense, the Odours of our Prayers, if we are out of *Christ*, they are all unhallowed breath. *The Prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.* Our Sacrifices are a burden to him; he rejects all our attendances. *Why tread you in my Courts? Their Vine is the Wine of Sodom, and of the Fields of Gomorrah; their Grapes are Grapes of Gall; their clusters are bitter, their Wine is the poison of Dragons, and the cruel venom of Asps,* Deut. 32. 32. Our natural best fruits, respectively to Eternal Life, are odious and abominable.

3. The Extent of this Displeasure reacheth even to the Creatures that are about us. Even for our sakes, the whole Creation is involved in his Displeasure. Sin hath blasted the Beauty of all God's Workmanship. God is out of love with the whole frame of the World, in indignation to man's sin. At our Fall, Gen. 3. the Earth was Curfed; and that Curse none but *Christ* can take off. *Malachi* closeth up the Old Testament with the same Curse; *I will smite the Earth with a Curse.* The Law leaves the Creatures under a Curse. In the Law, the House, the Bed, the Seat of the Leaper, were all defiled: so, the whole frame of the Creatures is defiled, leprous by our contagion. We have made Paradise a Pest-house. *The whole Creation groans, being made subject to corruption, and vanity.* Rom. 8. As it was said of *Jerusalem*, *Why hath the Lord done thus to this City?*

City? So of the whole World, Why is it devoted to destruction? 'Tis because of God's Displeasure at sinners. Conceive, Ser. VI.

Secondly, This point Affirmatively: In *Christ* God is well pleased, in him graciously appeased and reconciled with us.

Here, we must make two enquiries:

1. *Quibus modis?* By what means?

2. *Quibus gradibus?* By what degrees *Christ* hath wrought it?

I. *Quibus modis?* By what means hath *Christ* gained us the love of his Father? These four ways;

1. By his Intercession: He is well pleased in him, Praying, and Interceding for us. The Prayer of our Saviour is of Infinite power to prevail with God. *Joh. 11. 42. Father, I know that thou hearest me always.* It argues the love and power of friendship, when we obtain, not only for our selves, or those about us, but can reconcile, and pacifie offences towards others. It argued great favour to *Abraham*, that he could prevail so much for *Sodom*. Thus God graced *Job*, when his friends were sent to beg his entreaties. Much more do the Intercessions of *Christ*, those strong cries and supplication, by which he continually obtains mercy for us, argue God's being highly pleased with him. *Moses* his Prayer for the People, bound the hands of God; *Now therefore let me alone, Exod. 32. 10.* Yet that is nothing so prevailing as *Christ's* Prayer. *St. Steven's* Prayer procured *Saul's* Conversion; how much more shall *Christ's*, *Father forgive them*, reconcile us to God? recommend us to his mercy?

2. By his Satisfaction he hath wrought this peace, and made him well pleased, having satisfied for us. Satisfaction, it is the making up of a wrong, or injury, or damage, by the paying of a full recompensation. Now the sufferings of *Christ* were,

1. Of that Infinite value in their natural Dignity;

2. Of that high esteem in God's valuation; that by them, the breach of Gods Law had a condign satisfaction by this performance. Penal Statutes are never satisfied, but by the mulct and forfeiture. The Law of God, that's Penal; the price of his Death, the value of his Blood, that was laid down, and in it God is pleased.

3. By his Merit: In him God is well pleased, as Meriting for us. *Christ's* actions had not only the virtue of impetration or satisfaction, but of abundant Merit, to purchase favour for us. Now the reason why *Christ's* Merits do thus pacifie God, is, because his Merits do more please him, than sin can displease him, *Praestando bonum acceptabilius.* *Christ's* obedience gave God higher content, than our disobedience can discontent him. He is more delighted in his Righteousness, than he was offended by our unrighteousness. This is like, and beyond *Noah's* Sacrifice, *A favour of rest in the Nostrils of God; I will curse the Earth no more.* This is a main Argument against Despair; *Christ* hath more pleas'd God, than thou hast displeased him.

4. By his Union. God is pleased in him, uniting us to him. Not one hair of *Christ's* head shall perish. *He is the Saviour of his body, Ephes. 5. 23.* When we are implanted into *Christ*, then God looks graciously upon us. As *Isaac* said unto *Jacob*, *Gen. 27. 21. Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my Son, whether thou be my very Son Esau, or not:* So, when God feels us to be members and parts of his Son, O, 'tis the voice of my Son, 'tis a member of his Body, then his Soul blesses us. This Union makes us to enjoy a Communion in all that *Christ* did: As *S. Bernard* speaks, *Non alius qui foris fecit, alter qui satisfecit, quia caput & corpus unus est Christus. Christus, non potest habere membra damnata.* That's the first, *Quibus modis?* See,

II. *Quibus gradibus?* Take them in these three steps:

1. In *Christo placabilis:* *Christ's* Mediation, and God's good pleasure in him, makes him placable, and appeaseable, and reconcileable. Out of *Christ*, God is a consuming fire, *Heb. 12. 29.* His thoughts towards us, are only thoughts of anger: But his Son hath founded a new Covenant, in which God is Intreatable, Sin Pardonable, Heaven Attainable. This is one step of favour he hath wrought

Serm. VI. his Father to, to enter a Parley and Treaty of Reconciliation; He hath set up an Office, to sue out our Pardon; He hath set forth a gracious Remedy, open'd a Fountain for sin, and for uncleanness. *Non sic Diabolis.* God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, 2 Cor. 5. 19. and hath sent Ambassadors, ver. 20. to treat, and intreat for Reconciliation.

2. In *Christo placatus*: That's more. Our Peace and Reconciliation, is actually obtained in, and for him only. *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, Ephes. 1. 6. Thus the Apostle, *Having slain enmity*; not only weakened it, but overcome it, *He hath reconciled us unto God*, Ephes. 2. 16. He presents us to God, obtains our Pardon, knocks off our Fetters, discharges us out of Prison, cancels our Bill, seals up our Pardon.

3. In *Christo continuò placandus*. Christ doth not only set us in *Statu quo*, and so leaves us; but brings us into favour, and holds us up in favour. Christ is of perpetual use; not at our first Reconciliation, but in all our Life. This Virtue of Christ,

1. Makes our sins of another condition than when we were out of him: They are not *condemnatoria*; but our Pardon shall be granted.

2. Makes our actions, though imperfect, yet acceptable, because done in him. He is the Altar, that sanctifies the Offering: His Odours perfume our Prayers. In Numb. 6. 19, 20. *The Priest, at the Offering, was to lay his hands upon the hands of him who brought it, and to wave it before the Lord*: So Christ, he is to present our Prayers, and all our Offerings, and that makes them acceptable.

3. Our persons, they are look'd upon as in Christ, and so with them God is well pleased.

Corollaries from hence, let be these:

1. In *quo complacitum*; ergo *non ex odio Patris mortè tradendus*. Peter thought, Christ must not die; *We thought him forsaken of God*. No, it was not hatred of his Son, that brought him to Death; for he was most pleas'd with him in his Death.

2. In *quo complacitum*; ergo *gratuitum*; 'Tis good pleasure, and acceptation, that's all our tenure. He had a Son who pleas'd him, he needed not us.

3. In *quo complacitum*; ergo *firma reconciliatio*. If God's favour were in our selves, we should soon forfeit all; but our Salvation is now put into Christ's hands. He is *Sequester Dei, & hominum*. All's entail'd upon him.

Oh, let us bless Christ for making our peace: let us kiss him, for whose sake God is well pleased with us;

1. *Osculo Fidei.*

2. *Osculo Gratiitudinis.*

3. *Osculo Amoris.*

} With the kiss of Faith, Thankfulness, Love.

So much for the Excellency of his Mediation. Now follows, Thirdly, The Authority of his Doctrine; *Hear Him*. In it two things;

1. The Designation of the Person, *Him*.

2. The Prescription of the Duty, *Hear*.

First, The Designation of the Person, *Him*. Christ, he is appointed by God the Father to be the Prophet, and Teacher of his Church. Hence he is stiled in Scripture, *A Prophet*: Deut. 18. 15. *A Prophet will the Lord your God raise up of your Brethren like unto me; Him shall you hear*. He assumes this Title to himself, displaces all Rabbies; One is your Doctor and Master, even Christ, Matth. 23. So, Heb. 3. 1. He is called, The Apostle, and High-Priest of our Profession. Mal. 3. 1. The Angel of the Covenant.

Now this Prophetical Dignity of Christ, that he is the grand Doctor of the Church, will appear, if we make these four Enquiries;

1. Enquire into his Authority, who hath authorized him;

2. Into his Sufficiencies;

3. Into his Priviledges;

4. Into his Discharge.

1. For his Authority; that is most full and ample: He hath a Commission from Heaven: Warranted,

1. By Predictions, and Prophecies; *I will give thee for a Covenant of the People, for a light of the Gentiles, Isa. 42. 6. to open the blind Eyes, to bring out the Prisoners from the Prison; and them that sit in darkness, out of the Prison-House, Verſ. 7. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath annointed me, to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, &c. Isa. 41. 1. This Christ applies to himself, Luk. 4. 21. So, Joh. 18. 37. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the World, that I should bear witness unto the Truth. Warranted,*

2. By his Father's publick Inauguration at his Baptism, and now on Mount Tabor. This honour God put upon him; and hath now set him on Mount Zion, to preach the Law, whereof God spake unto him.

3. By Signs and Wonders: *Rabbi, we know that thou art a Teacher sent from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doſt, except God be with him, Joh. 3. 2. As Moſes was ſent, and authorized by a wonder-working Power; ſo Chriſt had his Commiſſion ſeal'd up by mighty Works. Miracles are the ratification of his Doctrine. We muſt have Sigillum Eccleſiæ, in ordinary Calling; or miraculous, in extraordinary.*

2. For his Sufficiency: Whom God ſends, he fits and enables. But Chriſt hath an All-ſufficiency for an abſolute Diſcharge of his great Work. He had,

1. The enablement of Knowledge: He is richly furniſhed with all kind of Knowledge: *In him are all the Treasures of Wiſdom and Knowledge, Coloſ. 2. 3.*

1. *Treasures of Knowledge; i. e. Precious Knowledge, Saving Knowledge.*

2. *Treasures of Knowledge; i. e. Plentiful Knowledge. We know but in part; but all the Counſel of God is made open to him. Solomon, who could ſpeak of every Creature, was but ignorant, if compar'd with Chriſt. A greater Wiſdom, than that of Solomon, was in him.*

3. *Treasures; i. e. Hidden and Stored Knowledge was in him; thoſe Secret Myſteries that were laid up in the boſom of Eternity, he had the Knowledge of.*

Now this Knowledge is communicated to him, not, as to us, *Studio & Industria*; not, as to the Prophets, by Dreams, or Viſions, or Revelations of Angels: but by a clear, full, intimate view, and beholding of the God-head, the Fountain of all ſacred Knowledge. Chriſt had,

2. The enablement of all other gracious endowments, the full aſſiſtance of the Spirit. All other Saints were limited and imperfect in theſe gifts. *Moſes was ſlow of ſpeech; but his Lips were full of Grace. Paul was learned, but not Eloquent; Apollos Eloquent, but not ſo profound: But Chriſt had all; His Lips drop down Myrrh. Then, this aſſiſtance was continued, and conſtant. Thoſe gratiæ, that are gratis datæ, are ſometimes more full, ſometimes more ſparing: Sometimes the door of Utterance is opened to us, ſometimes it is ſhut: Sometimes we have more aſſiſtance, ſometimes leſs: but Chriſt had it always in a full meaſure. As light is always in the Sun, but the Air receives it, per modum conuſcationis, unevenly, uncertainly.*

3. For his Priviledges. Theſe were far above all Prophets, Doctors, Inſtructors. Four main Priviledges he had;

1. *Univerſality: He had an unlimited, and unbounded Commiſſion; not only to one Nation, but to the whole Church. Nay, not ſo only to the preſent Church; but to the Church, preſent, paſt, and to come. All Prophecies were inſpired by him: All the Prophets borrowed their light from him: All ſate at the feet of this Gamaleel. The Spirit that ſpoke in the Prophets, 'tis called, 1 Pet. 1. 11. The Spirit of Chriſt. By this Spirit, Chriſt preach'd in Noah, to the old World, 1 Pet. 3. 19.*

2. He is *Infallibilis Doctor*; an unerring, infallible Doctor and Teacher. He is not only wiſe, but Wiſdom it ſelf; not only true, but Truth it ſelf.

Serm. VI. We have an Infallibility of Rule and Direction, the Scripture: The Apostles had a further Infallibility of Assistance and Inspiration; but *Christ* was most naturally, and, of himself, infallible. *He is the faithful and true Witness*, Rev. 3. 14.

3. He had *Excellentiam Doctrinæ*, above all before him. *Moses* and his Followers, they were but Doctors of the Law, the *Ministry of Condemnation*: The Prophets, they were Ministers of the Promises; all, *de bonis futuris*: but *Christ* came with Performances; *He brought Life and Immortality to light by the Gospel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. Tidings and Intimations are good; but real Evidences and Performances, they are far more welcom.

4. He is *Efficax*, a most Effectual and Prevailing Doctor: *He hath made my mouth like a sharp Sword*, Isa. 49. 2. So S. *John*, Rev. 19. 15. *Out of his mouth goes a sharp Sword: Not in ore gladii, but in gladio veris*; His Teaching is inward and spiritual. *Cathedram habet in cælo, qui docet eam*: All others affect the Ear; He only speaks to the Heart. He opens our Understandings, that we may understand the Scriptures; He writes his Laws in our Hearts. Lastly,

4. For his Discharge, it is with absolute Fidelity, without concealing any Portion of God's Truth. He gives up an exact Account, Joh. 17. 8. *I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them; and have known surely that I came out from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me.* *Moses* was faithful; *Christ* was as, nay, above *Moses*, in all Fidelity. He lost none of his Sheep, whom the Father had committed to him. He preferred the Preaching of his Father's Will, before his Food; more than his appointed Food. *Moses*, he took the Account of the People; and again, when he died, the People accounted, to shew his Fidelity. So *Christ*; *Not one whom thou gavest me is lost*, Joh. 17. 12.

More particularly; This Designation of the Person, it may be considered in these five distinguishing Respects:

1. Respectively to the Father; *Hear him*. He sends us to his Son. We have no Voice from the Father, but this bidding us to look for no Voice but from *Christ*. *Pharaoh* sends all for Corn to *Joseph*. Thus he discharges them from any more Visions and Revelations: there is now no other *Urim* and *Thummim*, but this lively Oracle.

2. Respectively to *Moses* and *Elias*. *Peter* would gladly listen to them; that Heavenly Conference much affected him. No, God discharges *Moses* and *Elias*; their Ministration is out of date; they have served their time: now he speaks to us by his Son. They were all like *Ushers* in the School, *Christ* is the Grand Teacher. These Stars must set, now this Sun arises. They are compared to Under-Tutors and Governours, till the time came that we must be *Θεοδιδασκαλοι*. Before, he spake, *ut Josephus, per Interpretem*; now we see the Face of *Christ*, and hear him speaking unto us.

3. Respectively to the subordinate Ministers, and Means of Salvation; in their Preaching still we must *hear him*. What the Jews did blasphemously, we must devoutly; we must cry out, *The Voice of God, and not of Man*. *He that receives you, receives me*. Thus the *Galatians* receiv'd S. *Paul*, as an Angel of God, even as *Christ Jesus*, Gal. 4. 14. He who spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets, speaks still. He who seeks a Proof of *Christ's* speaking in his Ministers, let him know, he despises not Man, but God; take heed ye despise not him that speaks from Heaven.

4. Respectively to any Successour, to whom *Christ* should give place; look for no more, *Hear him*. This is the last time. There is no other means of Salvation. The Law was imperfect, insufficient, therefore it is abolished; but surely they will reverence my Son. His Gospel, it is *Evangelium æternum*. *Nobis non opus est curiositate post Christum, nec inquisitione post Evangelium*.

5. Respectively to all that he shall teach. His Patent, it is general; no Man was ever so authorized, but his Commission was limited. *Christ* hath an universal Charter. We must question nothing; not doubt of any Point of his Doctrine, not in some Cases, but to all purposes.

1. *Quamvis supra rationem in mysteriis.*
2. *Quamvis contra carnem in officiis.*
3. *Quamvis ultra spem & possibilitatem in promissionibus.*
4. *Quamvis contra Moſen & Elian in lege abroganda.*

That's for the Designation of the Person, *Him*. Next is,
Secondly, The Act or Duty preſcribed, *Hear him*.

1. *Hear him*; Not think of gazing upon him, and erecting up Tabernacles. He honours *Chriſt* moſt, not who imagines ſome voluntary Service of his own; but who hears him, believes him, obeys him. The obedient Ear honours him. Acknowledge him as my Son; liſten to him, and believe in him; this is the trueſt Honour we can do to *Chriſt*. *Peter*, like *Martha*, was troubled to entertain him; we muſt, like *Mary*, ſit at his Feet, and hear him.

2. *Hear him*; Adore him, not only as my Son; believe in him, not only as your Saviour, *in quo complacitus ſum*; but hear him, as your Law-giver. *Chriſt* comes with Commandments and Duties, and expects our attention to them, as well as to his Promiſes. Set him up as thy Lord and Ruler, and reſolve to ſerve *Jeſus* thy Lord.



O N

The Transfiguration.

The Seventh Sermon.

S. Matth. XVII. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Verſ. 6. *And when the Diſciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were ſore afraid.*

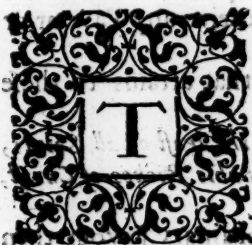
Verſ. 7. *And Jeſus came and touched them, and ſaid unto them, Arife, be not afraid.*

Verſ. 8. *And when they had liſt up their Eyes, they ſaw no man, ſave Jeſus only.*

Verſ. 9. *And as they came down from the Mountain, Jeſus charged them, ſaying, &c.*

Verſ. 6.

And when the Diſciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were ſore afraid.



His ſixth Verſe ſets out the Effect that this Voice from Heaven wrought in the Apoſtles. It caſts them into a Paſſion of Horror and Amaze-ment.

In it, two things:

1. The Impreſſion of this Paſſion; *They were ſore afraid.*
2. The Irruption of it into the Body; *They fell on their face.*

Fiſt, The Impreſſion of this Paſſion; *They were ſore afraid.* Of this we will take a double Conſideration:

1. Ex

Ser. VII. 2

1. *Ex parte Dei*; Why God stirs up in them this great Amazement.
2. *Ex parte eorum*; What occasioned it in them.

I. Consider it in respect of God. Purposely God affects them with this, rather than with any other Passion, for divers Reasons;

1. *Ut altius imprimeret in memoriam.* Those Lessons that are fastned into us with extraordinary fear, take deepest apprehension in us, stick fastest in us. Those Truths are dearest to us, that cost us dearest. Fear, and Horrour, and Temptation, are the most profitable Schools to learn in. As a Mother loves that Child most, that she brought forth with the greatest pain and sorrow.

2. To teach them the fittest and best way to make use of *Christ*. He hath now propounded him to them; and, to drive them to this Refuge and Sanctuary, to make them see their great weakness and insufficiency out of him, and need to shelter themselves in him, he purposely affrights and terrifies them. While we are at ease, no fears or terrors seize on us, we sit loose from *Christ*; but if Gods Glory once fears us, then we run to the Horns of this Altar. When men are prick'd in their Consciences, then they cry out; *What shall we do to be saved?* So the Jaylor. Before Conversion, Love is too weak an attractive to our servile Nature; Fear works more powerfully. Lot must be affrighted out of Sodom, and constrained to fly for his Life. The pursuing of the Avenger of Blood, must make the Man-slayer to fly to the City of Refuge. *Some save with fear, pulling them out of the Fire, Jude, vers. 23.*

3. This fear at the Voice of God, was sent upon them, to enforce them to this particular Duty, to hear *Christ*. The Voice of God out of *Christ* is terrible; but *Christ's* Voice, it is a comforting Voice. It is the gracious Goodness of God, and a merciful respect to our Infirmary; not to speak to us from Heaven by his own glorious Voice; that would amaze us; but to speak to us *more humano.* *Christ* Incarnate, and so Men of our quality and condition, are the most fit Means to speak to us. *Dent. 5. 26.* the People desire that *Moses* may speak unto them in God's Name; *Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it.* So the Apostle, *Heb. 12. 19.* *They that heard the Voice of God, intreated that the Word should not be spoken to them any more: vers. 20. For they could not endure it.* Nay, *Moses* himself did exceedingly fear and quake, *vers. 21.* Yet how perverse are we? Oh! we think, if God from Heaven would speak unto us, we would believe. Alas! How unable are we to bear it? If Men speak, we sleight it: *Is not Jesus one of us? His Brethren, and Sisters, are they not all with us? Matth. 13. 56.* If he speak himself, then he is too terrible; if by Men, then too contemptible: *They are offended at it.*

4. They are cast into this great dejection and fear, to humble them, lest the Glory of these Heavenly Visions should too much puff them up. Naturally we wax proud upon any extraordinary Favour: As *Haman*, being alone called to the Banquet with the King, how proud was he upon it? The Lord, to keep down our Spiritual Pride, after high Favours, usually exercises us with low Abasements. Thus *Paul*, lest he should be lifted up with those Revelations, he was buffeted by Satan. To this purpose,

1. Sometimes God humbles us, before he pleases to reveal himself to us. Thus *Abraham* was cast into a great horrour before God appeared to him. So *Isaiab*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*: So *Paul*, before he was called to be an Apostle, he was cast down to the Earth. Humility is the fittest Preparation to receive any Favour or Revelation from God. It makes us sensible,

1. Of our Weakness; that it is not our Strength that attains to these Revelations.

2. Of our Unworthiness: *To me, who am less than the least of all Saints, is this Grace given, that I should preach the unsearchable Riches of Christ, Ephes. 3. 8.*

2. Sometimes, after God hath vouchsafed us some extraordinary Favour, then he abases us, and casts us down. Thus *Jacob*, after his wrestling with God, was lamed.

lamed. *We must have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the Power may be seen to be of God, and not of us,* 2 Cor. 4. 7. Ser. VII.

II. Consider it in respect of themselves; what occasion'd this Terrour in them. It is strange, the Apostles should be thus affrighted:

1. They were *Sancti*: If they had been wicked and profane men, it had been no marvel. For *Balaam*, and such as he, to tremble, that's no wonder; but for these holy Men to be thus dismayed, is much.

2. They were in a warrantable and holy Action, yet are they affrighted. For men to be surpris'd with horror in an unwarrantable, prophane Action, that's no marvel; as *Belshazzar* in his Cups, to be struck with astonishment; and *Cain*, at the murdering of his Brother: But these were in a lawful Action, and yet affrighted.

3. They were in *praesentia Christi*. Indeed, to be left to our selves, and to see nothing but Terrours on God's part, there is some cause of fear; but to be so near a Sanctuary, and yet to tremble!

4. They had *Visiones laetas, & exhilarantes*; were made Partakers of Visions full of comfort and joy. To see *Christ* in Glory, and to enjoy a sweet Society with the Saints, and yet to be in fear! No marvel, if the presence of an angry God, and some dreadful Visions, should terrifie.

5. They heard *Vocem Pacificam*; that God in *Christ* was well pleased with them: yet they tremble. Indeed, to hear the Thundrings of the Law, that's terrible; but here was *Vox Evangelii*; here were *Harpers*, harping with their Harps, Rev. 14. 2. What should be the reason, that notwithstanding all these Hints of Comfort and Assurance, that yet they fear? See the grounds of this, in these three Observations:

1. These holy men, though Saints, yet they carry about them the Conscience of Sin, a secret Guiltiness; and that now awakens and troubles them. The best of us carry about us the Remainders of our Father *Adam*, his Guiltiness, his Fears. *I heard thy Voice in the Garden, and I was afraid—and I hid my self*, Gen. 3. 10. *Adam*, in his Innocency, was void of this Fear, he enjoyed a sweet Communion with God; but since, the best of us have many secret Accusations, and nibblings of Conscience, that will perplex and annoy us.

2. The Voice, and Presence, and Approach of God will awaken this Guiltiness of our Conscience. His Presence darts in a Light unto us, that makes Sin appear, that discovers to us our secret and concealed Sins. Indeed, the Saints, conversing with Men, seem to themselves and others unreprouable. So *S. Paul* is not conscious to himself of any thing; *But he that judges me is the Lord*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. He knew not Concupiscence to be Sin, till the Law passed upon him. The Light of a Candle doth not discover that which the Light of the Sun doth.

3. This Conscience, thus awaken'd, strikes us with fear and astonishment. *Oh, if the Lion roar, the Beasts tremble*. Then *Job* abhors himself in dust and ashes; as a bad Servant trembles when he sees his Master. So *Esa*; *Wo is me, I am undone*—for mine Eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts, Isa. 6. 5. Thus *S. Peter*; *Lord, depart from me, for I am a sinful man*, Luk. 5. 8.

To strengthen us against these Fears;

1. Get strength of Faith. Weak Faith will shrink. *Why did ye fear, O ye of little Faith?* Matth. 8. 26. It must be strength of Faith that can overcome terrours of Conscience, Agonies, Amazements.

2. Love, that casts out fear, 1 Joh. 4. 18. Get the Love of God shed into your Hearts, and then argue as *Manoah's Wife* did, *If the Lord were pleased to kill us—he would not have shewed us all these things*, Judg. 13. 23.

3. Maintain thy Peace with God; take heed of making a breach with him. Live not in any known Sin: This will make him fall heavy upon his dearest Servants. As, *Moses*, God met him in the Inn, and sought to kill him, because his Child was not circumcised, Exod. 4. 24. If a man be at peace with God, he fears no ill Tidings, his Heart is fixed.

4. Acquaint

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4. Acquaint thy self much with the thoughts of God; often present him to thy Soul; set up his Glory in thine Heart. If he be strange to thee, any appearance will be fearful; but if thou beest acquainted with him, then maist thou be confident.

5. Disburthen thy Conscience of all guiltiness of Sin. Let no Sin lie there unrepented of. Sin betrays thee to this Fear. It is not outward Terrours that so much disquiet, as do inward Terrours from sense of Sin. The least inward Pain is more troublesom than any outward. A Vapour in the Earth, makes an Earthquake.

6. Always keep *Christ* in thine Eye. *O Master, save us, we perish.* Make him thy Sanctuary: as Children run to their Father, if any thing affrights them. *I will fear none evil, for thou art with me,* Psal. 23. 4.

7. Nourish a voluntary religious Fear of God; it will prevent these violent and enforced Fears. *All knees must bow to him; he will be feared.* A devout Fear will prevent a slavish Fear. An humble Spirit, that bows of it self, shall not be broken. A Reed, that bends with the Wind, stands; when an Oak is rent up by the Roots. Nourish a Reverence of him in all places; especially on Mount *Tabor*, at his Word; *Serve him with reverence, and fear.*

So much for the sixth Verse. Now follows,

Verf. 7. *And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, be not afraid.*

This Verse sets out the comfortable and gracious Recovery of these Disciples, out of those amazing Fears into which they were cast. The Sum and Substance of it may be resolved into these considerable Observations.

First, Observe from the Agent in this Recovery: As by the Power of God they were cast into these Fears; so it is God alone who must raise and recover them. The Terrours of the Almighty are removable only by the Power of the Almighty. 'Tis not any Creature, but God only, who can raise and refresh them. *He hath torn, and he must heal us; he hath smitten, and he must bind us up,* Hof. 6. 1. *He maketh sore, and he must bind up; he woundeth, and his hands must make whole,* Job 5. 18.

Divers Reasons may be given;

1. From the Subject of these Terrours. These Fears are settled in the Soul and Conscience; clogg'd with secret guiltiness, awakened by the Voice of God, struck with horror and amazement. Now the Soul and Conscience, it is obnoxious only to the Power of God. He only can set these Terrours upon it, and so take them off again. No Created Power can strike Fear into the Conscience, or convey Comfort into it. He hath appropriated this to himself only. Our Outward man is liable to the Wrath of man, but the Conscience is God's Peculiar. Fear not them who can destroy the Body, but him who can strike terror into the Conscience, who can affright the Soul.

2. From the Nature of these Fears: They are supernatural, and spiritual, and so must be cured by answerable Comforts. Outward Applications cannot cure inward Maladies. But spiritual Comforts are from God only. *The Spirit of a man may sustain all other Infirmities, but a wounded Spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. Sickneses, Losses, natural and humane Means may relieve us in them; but these Apprehensions that come from Heaven, and upon sense of God's Majesty, they are of another nature. As Balls of Wild-fire, ordinary Water will not quench them; so these Flashes from Heaven are not extinguish'd with sub-lunary Comforts.

3. The Grounds of these Fears cannot be removed but by God; and so, by consequence, not the Fears themselves. Secret Guiltiness, Conscience of Sin, apprehension of God's Wrath, they betray us to these Fears. Now, none but God can free us from these. Guilt, it is an Obligation and Recognition, in which the Soul is bound over to answer to God's Tribunal. These Fears, like an Hue and Cry, are sent out against us; none can recal it, till God makes stay

stay of it. *I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou Preserver of men?* Ser. VII.
Job 7. 20.

This will appear in these three respects;

1. In those Sins that are not punishable by Man's Judgment, yet the Guilt of these will haunt the Conscience.
2. In those Sins that are not discernable by Man's Observation; when no Eye sees us, or can accuse us, yet then the Soul is troubled and perplexed. As *Cain*, he had an easie escapal; there was none but his Father upon Earth: yet, saith he, *Every one that findeth me, shall slay me*, Gen. 4. 14.
3. In those Persons who are subject to no Man's Censure. Kings, and those who are, in respect of Man, lawless and uncontrollable, as *David* was, yet he cries out, *Against thee have I sinned*, Psal. 51. Thus the Woman in *S. John* 8. though all her Accusers forsook her, yet she stood still, trembling before *Christ*, expecting his Doom or Absolution.

Application.

1. It must teach us to discern the true Cause and Original of these Spiritual Anxieties. We must know, they are the Terrours of the Almighty. Do as *Rebeckah*, *Why am I thus? Enquire of the Lord*, Gen. 35. 22. If we come to these Conjectures, 'Tis a Chance, as the Philistims said, we shall never think of those Courses that will do us good. Nature will answer, if we seek help of her, as the King of *Israel* did to *Naaman's* Messenger, *See, he sends to me to recover a man of his Leprosie; Am I God?*

2. It shews the Insufficiency of all other Means to recover our Spirits thus dismayed. Some other Means may, for a time, cast us into a Slumber; like *Opium* to a sick Body, it will stay the source of the Disease for a time, but it will break out again with greater violence.

There are three ways of Bodily Cures; Either,

1. We allay the Pain; Or,
2. Stupifie the Part affected; Or,
3. Remove the Cause.

So, some outward Worldly Means may, for a while, allay and mitigate these Fears and Anguishes: As Pleasure; *Saul* gets an Harper to chase away the evil Spirit: Or Employment; *Cain* falls to building of Cities, to drive away his Terrours: Or Company; the noise and din of that, may out-noise our Fears; but this is no Cure. Others go about to stupifie the Part, to benumb, and deaden, and sear Conscience, to make it senseless and brawny. Yet this cures not, but heals only, and skins over the Wound of Conscience. The Cure cannot be effected here, but by removing the Cause, which is the apprehension of God's Power against us.

3. It should make us careful to avoid the Causes and Occasions of such spiritual Fears, which, by all humane means, are irrecoverable. Those Diseases that have *Parabilia medicamenta*, are not so dangerous; men are not so shy of them: but, suppose that a Disease were in it self deadly, and but one Medicine in the World could cure it, and that too in the hand and skill of one only Physician, how careful would we be not to endanger the running into that Malady? These Fears of Conscience, they are like the King's-evil; none can cure it but the King; all other Helpers are Physicians of no value. The Conscience may, like the Woman in the Gospel, who had spent much upon Physicians, but was never the better, nay, the worse, she suffered much from Physicians; it may seek out for ease elsewhere, but all in vain, till God remove its Terrors. As they said of Leprosie, that it was not to be cured by the Art of the Physician, but it was left to the Hand of God; so we may say of Sin, and the Fears that arise in the Soul because of it.

Secondly, Another observable Consideration is, from the present and speedy Act of relieving and recovering of these Saints. They being cast into fear and perplexity, they are not suffered to lie under it, and to be swallowed up of it; but a speedy present Help is from God reach'd out unto them; they are raised and com-

Ser. VII. sorted. Observe, As God wisely suffers his Children to be overtaken with Fear and Perplexity; so he graciously orders it, that they shall not perish in these Amazements; but that they shall have a timely and seasonable recovery.

This he doth,

1. In much pity and tenderness to them. No Mother hastens more to catch up her Child that is fallen, than God hastens to relieve his Children. *He taketh pleasure in the prosperity of his servants, Psal. 35. 27.* He loves to see them in a joyful, comfortable condition. *Isa. 54. 7. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee.* *Verf. 8. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.* This he doth,

2. In care, lest they should be swallowed up, and overwhelmed with grief and fears. *Isa. 57. 16. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.* *Verf. 18. I will restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners.* S. Paul; how careful was he, lest the excommunicated *Corinthian* should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, *2 Cor. 2. 7.* Much more is *Christ*. God hastens to recover such. S. Peter being much dejected for his denial, a Message is speedily sent to him by the Angel, *Go your way, tell his Disciples, and Peter, that Christ is risen.* Peter thought himself cast off and forgotten; see here a special Tidings directed to him.

3. He measures out these Fears and Anguishes to his Children, in a just proportion; they shall undergo no more than is fitting for them.

1. Suitable to their Weakness, and what they can bear. *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, 1 Cor. 10. 13.* He wrestles with *Jacob*, but yet overpowers him not. Wrestling is, where there is a mutual strength of resistance. Had he laid his whole strength upon him, he could not have subsisted.

2. Suitable to the measure of their Corruption; that must be eaten out: and as soon as they are humbled and brought to a right temper, then he relieves them. *David* had an heavy Message dispatch'd to him, *Thou art the man, 2 Sam. 12. 7. I will raise up evil against thee, ver. 11.* As soon as he was thoroughly wrought upon, then presently comes a Message of Comfort, *verf. 13. The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.* So *Hezekiah*, *Isaiah* told him from God, he must die, *Isa. 38. 1.* but as soon as he was humbled, e're the Prophet gat out of the Court, he was remanded back with tidings of recovery. *Josiah*, as soon as his Heart melted, *Huldah* must comfort him. *Saul*, when he was sufficiently wrought upon by these Fears, *Ananias* was dispatch'd to him; *Brother Saul, receive thy fight, Acts 9.*

It is otherwise with the wicked; Fears and Anguishes come upon them in extremity. As it was with King *Saul*; God forsook him; he had Fightings within, and Terrours without; he had no Answer by Prophets or Ephod, but he must sink under these Fears. So *Belshazzar*; so *Judas* finds no relief, but is swallowed up of these Horrors. The Reason is,

1. God deals with them as with an Enemy, in hatred; but with his own, in love.

2. Their Sorrows are as Poyson to destroy them: No matter how much they have of them. The Saints Fears are as a Sovereign Medicine, temper'd by God's own Hand, order'd to work Health in them. When the Cure is wrought, the Plaister falls off.

4. He brings them seasonably out of these Distresses; because, in them, they are unfit and unable for any Service. Moderate Fears and Sorrows often whet our Devotion; but excessive Anguish dulls our Spirits. As the *Israelites* heeded not what *Moses* said, *for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage, Exod. 6. 9. Metus, haud diuturni officii Magister.* He would have us serve him without fear, all the days of our lives, *Luke 1. 74. 75.*

Application.

Application.

1. It must teach us to become such to whom God uses to moderate and mitigate these fears. Wouldst thou not have them come upon thee as an armed man? Then be of the number of those whom he thus compassionately cares for. It is his Promise to his Church, *They shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid*, Ezek. 34. 28. To a wicked man, God saith, *What hast thou to do with Comfort? I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh*, Prov. 1. 26. *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil*, Rom. 2. 9. *Fear, and the pit, and the snare shall be upon them*, Isa. 24. 17. But they that trust in the Lord, shall not fear any evil tidings. *Behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit*, Isa. 65. 15, 16. Being so,

2. It should refresh us in all Perplexities: We should say with David, *At what time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. Sorrow may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.*

See the diverse Carriage of God to wicked men, and to his own Children. *Matth. 28.* At the Glory of Christ's Resurrection, and the Angel's Appearance, the Soldiers were afraid, and the holy Women were afraid: But the fear of the Soldiers overwhelmed them, and so the Angel left them to shift as they could; there was not any word of comfort spoken to them: But the good Women, though much perplexed, yet had a word of comfort; *Be not ye afraid*, vers. 45. *I know whom ye seek.* S. Paul was in distresses, but not forsaken. Daniel, when he was struck with fears, then was it said to him, *O man, greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee, be strong, yea be strong*, Dan. 10. 19.

That's the second observable Consideration.

Thirdly, Here is observable the Person who relieves and comforts them; it is Jesus. The glorious Voice of the Father affrights them; the gracious Voice of Christ, that refreshes them. Observe, It is Christ alone who can raise and comfort those whom the Terrours of the Almighty hath cast down and dejected. 'Tis Christ's peculiar Work and Function; to release us from the Horrors of Conscience, and Amazements of Soul.

1. He hath merited it at God's Hand, to have this Office, to succour and relieve us. Purposely he was made acquainted with Fears, that so he might merit Comfort for us in our Fears. His Spirit wrestled with the Terrours of God. *His Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*, Matth. 26. 38. *I am afflicted, and ready to die from my youth, while I suffer thy terrours, I am distracted*, saith the Psalmist in the Person of Christ, Psal. 88. 15. Those horrors and that dread into which his Soul was brought, merited for us a merciful supply of Comfort in our Distresses.

2. He was sent of God the Father to preach, and bring Comfort against our Fears. *Isa. 61. 1.* *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the Captives.* He came preaching Peace. Moses, he preach'd Terrour; Christ, he preaches Comfort. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God*, Isa. 40. 1.

3. God hath fitted him with tenderness of Compassion; he hath put into him Bowels of Pity towards all in Perplexity. *He is touched with a feeling of our Infirmities.* He never look'd upon any that were in sorrow, or need, or misery, but his Compassion was stirr'd in him. *He had compassion on the multitude*, Matth. 15. 32. *He had compassion on the two blind men, and touched their eyes*, Matth. 20. 34. He was moved with compassion towards the poor Leper, and cleansed him, Mark 1. 41.

4. He hath founded the New Covenant, and Gospel, which is a state of Freedom and Comfort. The Old Testament was carried with more manifestations of Fear. A Spirit of Bondage was upon them: But (saith the Apostle, 2 Tim. 1. 7.) *God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.*

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5. He gives and bequeaths to us the Spirit of Comfort; and hath given him this Office, to be a *Comforter* to us. He is call'd *The Comforter*; not the Enlightner, or Sanctifier, (though these be his Works) but the Comforter.

It should teach us to have recourse to *Christ* in all our Fears and Perplexities; as the Apostles, *Master, carest thou not that we perish?* In all distresses, make known thy sorrows to him. *His Peace shall rule your Hearts.* He is like the Wood that sweetned the bitter Waters of *Marah*.

That's a third observable Consideration.

Fourthly, Here is yet one more, and that is the manner of *Christ's* merciful and gracious recovering them out of this amazement. It is fourfold. He did it,

1. By a comfortable Appearance. His Transfiguration and Glory affrighted them; now, that he might more familiarly and comfortably refresh them, he lays aside his Majesty and Glory, and reassumes his Habit of Humiliation, and so offers himself to their Weakness and Infirmary: As *Moses* put a Vail upon his Face, that the People might endure his sight and presence. How gracious is this Condescending of *Christ*, to dispense with his own Glory, for our Comfort! Like *Joseph*, who discovered himself to his Brethren, fell upon their Necks, and received them with mutual Embracings. The truest sign of Greatness, is to stoop to others Weakness; 'tis *Signum roboris*, not *infirmittatis*, saith *Gregory*. Till that time, when he will make our Bodies like his glorious Body, he makes his glorious Body like our weak Bodies. He did it,

2. By his comfortable Approach; *He came to them*.

1. Strength of Faith would have carried them to him: as *Peter*, *Matth.*

14. 20. *Master, bid me come unto thee.*

2. Moderate Fear would have driven them to him. Or,

3. It would have made them call to him for help. Oh! but they are in a weaker and lower Condition; their Faith is in a swoon; their Fear hath overwhelmed them; there is no power left to seek for succour; therefore, they not being able to seek out for help, see he offers himself graciously to them.

Here is the Comfort of Christians; 'tis possible we may be so low brought, as not to be able to call, or look up to *Christ*; yet then he leaves us not. When we cannot comprehend him, then he will comprehend us. Our Faith may be so weak, as not to be able to lay hold upon him; yet then his Spirit apprehends us. In Sickness, when Speech, and Sense, and all fail; yet a Child of God hath this comfort, He will come to me, when I lie unable to come to him. This case *David* was in, *Psal.* 73. 22, 23. *So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a Beast before thee. Nevertheless, I am continually with thee, thou hast holden me by my right hand.* He did it,

3. By his comfortable touching of them; He puts his Hand upon them. Now this Gesture and Action of *Christ* was very usual in his Miraculous Works. *Matth.* 8. 3. *He touched the Leper*, and cleansed him. *Verf.* 15. *He touched Peter's Wives Mother*, and cured her of a Fever. *Matth.* 9. 29. *He touched the two blind men*, and they received their sight. *Matth.* 14. 36. *They besought him, that they might only touch the hem of his Garment, and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.*

Christ uses this Gesture of Touching, for divers Reasons;

1. It is *Signum facilitatis*. He works Wonders with his Touch; that is, with the greatest ease and facility. This was eminently seen in *Christ's* Wonders. Nature must use stronger Means to work any Work. Nay, *Elias*, when he was to recover the Womans Child, stretch'd his Body upon it, often begg'd of God, before he could effect it. *Christ*, he effects by the least means. The smallest means, in appearance, are by him made powerful to work effectually. Purposely he makes choice of such seemingly improbable Means, the more to magnifie the Glory of his Power; the Means themselves having no force at all to effect such Wonders. Thus *Joshua*, *Chap.* 6. 3. The compassing of *Jericho* seven days, blowing with Rams-horns; *Magis videntur mysteria consummare, quam bella*: What force were there in this, to batter down a City? Thus it was in *Naaman's* washing seven times in *Jordan*, 2 *Kings* 1. 5. In the Blind man's Cure

by

by Clay and Spittle, and washing in *Siloam*, *John* 9. 6. Thus the looking upon the Brazen Serpent, cured the People. He fed five thousand with five Loaves and two Fishes. To teach us, Ser. VII.

1. Not to rest in the most effectual Means, though never so hopeful; but to look up to him who works by them.
 2. Not to despair in the weakest of Means, if of his appointment. If they be *Siloam*, (which is, by interpretation, *Sent*) he can make them effectual.
2. It is *Signum Applicationis*; By this touch he shews, that he helps by a real and close application of himself to us. *Omnis actio per contactum*. So there must be a close application of *Christ* to us, if we mean to receive any Virtue from him. And to this purpose we meet with a double Touch:

1. *Christ* toucheth us, as here he did the Apostles; that is, he immediately unites and applies himself, his Grace, Power, Spirit, to us, when he conveys any good to us.
2. We must touch *Christ*; that's *Contactus Fidei*: Faith must draw near to him, as the Woman in *Matth.* 9. 21. *If I may touch but the hem of his garment, I shall be whole*. Hence, saith *Christ*, *Thy Faith hath made thee whole*.
3. It is *Signum miræ Efficaciæ*; The least, if true and real, Union with *Christ*, conveys Grace and Good to us. Nature must have *Vim, & Moram*; *nihil tam efficax, ut in transitu proficit*; but the Word, the Touch of *Christ* is effectual. So Faith, if it be not able to lay hold upon him strongly, yet if it can but touch him, as the Woman, *Si tetigero; minimus actus*; and, *simbriam, minimum objectum*.
4. It is *Signum virtutis Humanitatis Christi*; The Humanity and Body of *Christ* was *Omnium instrumentum miraculorum*: As sanctified and quickned with the Deity, it served as a powerful Instrument to convey spiritual and supernatural Power. 'Tis *Caro vivifica*: There dwelt Virtue in it. *The Leaves of the Tree of Life saves the Nations*. The Humanity of *Christ* had not a transfusion of Divine Properties; but it was enrich'd by the Deity with miraculous Virtue; which being drawn forth by Faith, works Wonders. He did it,

4. *Voce Consolante*; He comforts them by a gracious Word of heartning and encouragement: *Arise, and be not afraid. He will speak peace to his people, and to his servants*, *Psal.* 85. 8. *Arise*,

1. It is a Word of Assurance, as making known to them, that there is no cause of fear. 'Tis *Christ*, and his Word and Warrant, that can secure us. *Master, at thy word I will let down the net*, *Luke* 5. 5. Let all terrors compass us, yet if *Christ* encourage us, it is enough. *Fear not, Go forward*, made *Moses* enter the Sea.
2. It is a Word promising Assistance. If he bid us *Arise*, we may hope for his help. *Have not I commanded thee?* As *Jacob* in his fear, *The Lord that said unto me, or bade me, return unto my Country*; that encouraged him.
3. 'Tis *Verbum Operatorium*; It breathes Life, and Strength, and Courage into them. But what can a Word do to a fainting Man? Yes,
 1. 'Tis *Verbum Dei*, that is effectual; He speaks Life and Health. That Word made us of Nothing.
 2. 'Tis *Verbum Spiritu corroboratum*; there goes with it a sweet and powerful Concurrence of his Spirit: As, *Ezek.* 2. *The Word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, — And the Spirit entred into me, and set me upon my feet*.

Come we to the eighth and the ninth Verses. Of which, in short.

Verf. 8. *And when they had lift up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.*

Verf. 9. *And as they came down from the Mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the Vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.*

We are now come to the Closure and Conclusion of this glorious Vision. In it two things;

1. The

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1. The Issue and End of it; *They saw Christ alone.*
2. The Use they were to make of it; A seasonable Concealment of it for a time.

First, For the Issue and End of it. And this offers to us a threefold Consideration:

1. A Cessation of all other Appearances. *Moses and Elias* are vanished and withdrawn; they see no man remaining.
2. The Continuance and Abode of *Christ*. He stays, and appears, and continues amongst them.

3. Their Eyes are fixed upon him; Him only they behold. And so from hence draw these three Conclusions:

1. *Moses* and *Elias*, the Law and the Prophets, have but a temporary station and abode in the Church. *Christ* being brought into the World, they are withdrawn.
2. *Christ's* Office, and Glory, and Government in his Church, 'tis lasting and perpetual.
3. The Eye, and Observation, and Faith of the Church is fixed upon *Christ* only. They look upon none other, nor expect any other after him.

I. The Law and the Prophets, they are determined by *Christ's* coming. *Moses* and *Elias*, they vanish.

1. They were of a finite and limited duration; not set over the Church as a perpetual Order; but had their times fixed and bounded. Three Times there were that bounded them:

1. The Time of Reformation: God had appointed a more exact and perfect Government of his Church, to succeed them. *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*; that which is imperfect must yield. Thus we see *Aaron*, he was call'd upon by God to die; and then *Moses*.

2. The Fulness of Time; that was their stint, till he should come, who should fill up all things with his Coming.

3. A third Time was, *Adulta ætas Ecclesiæ*: When that time is come, the Heir is no longer under Tutors and Governours, Gal. 4.

2. Their Nature and Purpose was for a time only;

1. They had an Use of Promising; that Age was trained up all under Promises: When the Performance came, then all Promises were to be abolished.

2. They had an Use of Prefiguring, and Typifying, and Shadowing out of Good things to come: When the Body and Substance comes, the Shadows and Figures cease. Blossoms wither, when the ripe Fruit appears.

3. They had an Use of Prophesying; and Prophecy, we know, looks not upon present things, but upon future: When the Truths of all Prophecies are fulfilled, then they cease.

II. *Christ's* Presence, and Authority, and Government in his Church, 'tis lasting and perpetual. *Moses* and the Prophets have served their time, and have given place; but *Christ* remains for ever. This the Jews believed; *We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever*, Joh. 12. 34. Hence the Gospel, 'tis called *Evangelium æternum*: And the time of the Christian Church, it is called, *The last time*; because there is to be no more Instruction in Religion; no new Sacrifice, or Priest, or Prophet, or Sacraments, or Form of Government.

1. He hath made a full Accomplishment of all Prophecies and Predictions; there is no looking for another.

2. He hath manifested and revealed all Truth to his Church. This is the Dignity that God reserved for his Son; *All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you*, Joh. 15. 15. The Church of the Jews had all necessary Truths revealed: But,

1. Not so clearly: 2 Pet. 1. 19. That was but as a Candle that shines in a dark place: *Christ* brings all Truth to light by the Gospel. Now the

whole

whole Wisdom of God shines in the Face of Jesus Christ. We understand more clearly than the Prophets themselves, 1 Pet. 1. 10. Ser. VII.

2. Not so fully: Indeed they had a Sufficiency for that present Estate; but now abundance of Truth covers the Earth, as the Waters cover the Sea.

3. They had Additions, and the Rule of Faith was increased to them. But we are to expect no more; the Word of God is sealed up and ratified.

3. He hath accomplished, and effectually wrought all the Good that the Church can be capable of. He hath offered up a full Sacrifice, obtain'd the Gift of the Holy Ghost. This was one Cause of abolishing of the Law; it was weak, made nothing perfect; *They received not the Spirit by the hearing of the Law.* That comes by the Gospel. And therefore it is call'd πληρωμα Ευαγγελιου, *The Fulness of the Gospel.*

III. The Eye of the Church looks only upon Christ, fixes upon him, and expects no other. This is the main difference betwixt the Jewish Church, and Ours. They were all in expectation, and were Waiters for better Times: But our Faith hath him exhibited, and presented, and rests upon him. Hence Christ forewarns them, not to listen to, or look after any other: *If any shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not,* Matth. 24. 23. Go not forth, look not after him. *Oculis videntibus Jesum, nihil dignum præter Jesum:* The Sun arising, darkens all the Stars; so all the former Saints are obscured to the Eye of the Church, and he alone must shine in his full Glory: As when the King enters into any City, all Authority is resigned up to him; all Viceroyes and Lieutenants must resign up to him: So Moses and the Prophets, all yield up their Place in the Church to Christ.

Now follows,

Secondly, The Use they must make of this Transfiguration; and that is a seasonable Concealment. In it,

1. The Injunction it self, *Jesus charged them.*

2. The Nature and Purpose of it, *Not to publish it.*

3. The Time how long, *Till the Resurrection.*

First, The Injunction, *Jesus charged them.*

Observe, It is the Dignity and Prerogative of Christ, to prescribe to his Church a Law of Truth, what should be published and taught in his Church, and what should be concealed.

1. He is *Primarius Doctor, & Legislator*: He teacheth as one having Authority; and it is in his Power to propound what Truths he will: He is Lord of our Faith, and may propound to our Faith whatsoever he pleaseth. All other are but subordinate and limited Teachers, and must be regulated from this grand Doctor. *Eccles. 12. 11. The Masters of the Assemblies receive all their Words, as given from one Shepherd.* Hence they are described with Terms and Title of Limitation.

1. They are Apostles, Messengers, not going in their own Names, or publishing what pleases them; but receiving Tidings from him who sent them.

2. They are Ambassadors. They must have Instructions, and limited Commissions. 'Tis high presumption to treat of any thing that is not given them in charge.

3. They are Stewards, not Lords and Masters in the House; but must feed the Family with Food appointed them.

4. They are called Interpreters; not Authors of Truth, but Expositors.

5. They are Depositaries; Truth is committed to their trust. *That good thing committed to thee,* 2 Tim. 1. 14.

2. Christ alone knows, *Quæ utilia*; what Truths are profitable, and useful, and saving Truths. Humane Curiosity would search into many things, and ask as he did, *Master, how many shall be saved?* As Peter, *What shall become of John?*

As

Ser. VII. As the Apostles, *Master, Wilt thou now restore the Kingdom to Israel?* But *Christ* best knows all vital saving Truths.

3. He alone knows the Capacity of his Church and Children, what Truths are fit for them, what they can bear. Thus, having given *Solomon* a large capacious Heart, he imparted to him all kind of Wisdom. For others, he distills in those necessary Truths which are of a full proportion for their Judgments and Understandings. Thus *S. Paul*, being guided by *Christ's* Direction, preached only easie Truths to the *Corinthians*; gave them Milk, as unto Babes; But to those who have exercised Judgments for them, stronger Truths. Thus, as the High-Priest was to divide the Sacrifice; to God, his part; to the Priests, their part; to the People, their part: So, some Truths there are we must leave to God; some there are for Ministers; some for the Common People. That's the Injunction.

Secondly, The Nature and Purpose of it; The Vision must be concealed. 'Tis observable, in the Works and Doctrine of *Christ*, sometimes he commands Secrecy and Concealment. *Matth. 9. 30.* Having cured two blind men, he charges that none should know it. So, *Mark 5.* having raised *Jairus* his Daughter, charged none should know it. And so for Truths; he hath been pleased to reserve some Truths from publick and common notice, and to reserve them till afterwards.

1. Thus in the Old Law;

1. The Mystery of the Trinity, it was exceeding dainty, and reservedly revealed.

2. The Divinity of the Messias; That he was to be Man, was more evident; but it was secret that he was God. The Scribes could not conceive, how *David's* Son should be *David's* Lord.

3. The Calling of the Gentiles, was a Secret hid from Generations. The Jewish Church wondred at it. *Who hath begotten me these?* They counted it Blasphemy in *Stephen*, when he said, The Ordinances of *Moses* should be changed.

2. So now, to us;

1. The Conversion of the Jews.

2. The Overthrow of Antichrist.

3. The second Coming of *Christ*; they are all concealed from us.

Thirdly, This Vision of *Christ's* Divinity and Glory, that must be concealed till after his Resurrection:

1. Till then *Christ* is in *statu Humiliationis*, and so he will have his Majesty and Glory to be covered. Now he terms himself, the *Son of Man*: He was declared to be the Son of God, by the Resurrection from the dead, *Rom. 1.* Thus he was pleased to veil his Glory, and to become vile, and of no reputation.

2. It is *Documentum Modestiae*; His Glory, he is not ambitious to publish it: As *S. Paul* fourteen years concealed his Revelations: He glories in his Infirmities and Weaknesses; but till he was constrain'd, he kept his Rapture conceal'd.

3. Till his Resurrection, these Apostles were *Inepti*, weak and carnal; not sufficiently grounded in this Doctrine of *Christ's* Divinity. After his Resurrection, then they were endued with strength from above; and then those Mysteries that they could not bear, the *Comforter* reveal'd to them.

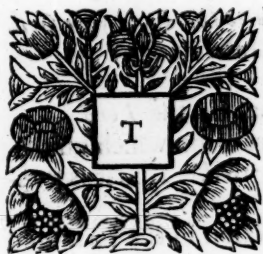
4. *Quia Incredibile*: The Infidelity of the World was not yet to be removed; it would not believe there had been such a Vision. Infidelity deprives us of many Truths, that God would otherwise reveal to us.

5. *Ne impediret Passionem*. It troubled *Pilate* to hear it mentioned, That *Christ* was the Son of God. And *S. Paul* saith, *Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Life and Glory.* He purposely concealed his Deity, to give way to his Passion. And hence it is, that he spake of his Divinity very reservedly: He charged, *They should tell no man who he was*, *Mark 8. 20.* but *ver. 32.* he spake plainly of his Passion. *Passio* is the Word,

A S E R M O N

On JOEL ii. 13.

Rent your Heart, and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for, He is gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.



His Chapter (if we cast back our Eyes to the former Verses) it is a fearful Prophecy from Almighty God, of Judgment, and Destruction. And yet, not so much a peremptory Prediction, what he absolutely intends, as a Commination only, what Conditionally he threatneth. And this Commination denounced against them, not in *Jonas's* Spirit, with purpose, and desire to have it fulfilled; but in much compassion, and commiseration; with Offers of Peace, and Reconcilement, that it might

be revers'd. *Minantur homines ut feriant; Deus, ne feriat.* Man, in his anger, threatens, when he means to strike; God threatens, that he might not strike; but that we may be forewarn'd, and ward off his blow.

It is *St. Augustin's* observation of *Christ's* foretelling the last Judgment; and it is true in this, and his other menaces; *Ideo multò ante prædicitur, ut à nobis totis viribus caveatur.* And again; *Inventus vindicat, qui, quo modo evadere possimus, multò ante demonstrat; non te vult percutere qui tibi clamat.* Observe, God forewarns us, that he might forearm us, to avoid his threatnings. The Condition he offers, it is Repentance. *Lex Innocentiam, Evangelium pœnitentiam;* The Gospel, that offers all Mercy, and Love; it strictly exacts, and requires Repentance.

The Text then, it is a vehement Exhortation to Sorrow, and Repentance. And not an Exhortation only what we should do; but a Direction also, how, and in what manner. *Tertullian* complain'd of the Heathen in his time, *Per pœnitentiam faciliùs delinquant, quàm per eandem rectè faciunt:* And it is as true of the *Jews*; They did so misplace the acts of Repentance, in outward Superstition, that their Repentance was no less sinful, than the very sins for which they repented.

For the Words themselves, they naturally fall asunder into these two parts;

1. Here is *Præceptum Pœnitentiæ:*

2. *Motivum Pœnitentiæ.*

1. The Precept of Repentance, in these words; *Rent your Heart, and not your Garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.*
2. The Motive to Repentance, in the words following; *For, He is gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

The Precept of Repentance divides it self into a double Exhortation, answerable to the two parts of Repentance:

The first is an Exhortation to Contrition, *Rent your Heart, and not your Garments:*

The second is an Exhortation to Conversion; *And return to the Lord your God.*

Serm. I.

1. In the former duty of Contrition, observe two things ;

1. *Actum* :

2. *Objectum*.

1. The Act, expressed in this word, *Rent*.

2. The Object ; that is specified,

1. Affirmative, what we must *rent* ; that's the *Heart*.

2. Negative, what we must *not rent*, *Not your Garments*.

And this latter Object may be resolved into a double sense :

1. If we conceive it as *Objectum solitarium* ; as divided, and sever'd from the *renting of the Heart* ; So it is *Sensus purè negativus*, a flat negative ; *Rent not your Garments* : Or,

2. As *Objectum conjunctum* ; Joyn *renting of the Heart, and Garments* together ; So, it is *Sensus comparativus* ; *Rent your Hearts* rather than *your Garments*. That's the first, the Exhortation to Contrition.

2. The Exhortation to Conversion, that follows ; *Return to the Lord your God*. *Return* ; and that implies a Motion. And therein observe three things :

1. *Motum ipsum*, the kind of Motion ; it is a *Returning*.

2. *Terminus Motus*, that whereunto we must return ; that is, the *Lord*.

3. *Habitudinem, mobilis ad terminum* ; that habitude, and relation which guides, and byasses us unto the term, in the words following, *Tour God*. And it is two-fold ; For,

1. As in all natural Motion, so in this ; there is an attraction in the term and place to which the Motion tends, that which draws the *Mobile* towards it ; as the Heaven doth the Fire ; that's in the last word, *God*.

2. An Impulsive in the *Mobile*, that which carries and disposes the thing moved, towards it, as levity in the Fire ; that's exprest in this word, *Tour* : He is *Tour God*. That's the first main Precept, the Precept of Repentance ;

The second follows, the Motive to Repentance, in these words, *For he is gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil*. And in it consider three things as most observable ;

1. *Speciem Motivi* ;

2. *Partes Motivi* ;

3. *Gradus Motivi*.

1. The kind and nature of the Motive ; It is a Motive and Perswasion drawn from one, who is *gracious, merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness, and repents of the ill*. All of them invitations of Love and Favour.

1. Contents not himself to put us in mind of our duty, we must *Return unto the Lord our God* ; So, requiring Repentance, *Sub ratione officii*, as performance of duty.

2. Uses no threatnings, intermingles no Curses ; So enforcing Repentance, *Sub ratione periculi*, for avoidance of danger ; but,

3. Urges mercy and favour. Strange, saith *Tertullian*, *præmio invitat ad salutem* ; So perswading to Repentance, *Sub ratione spei*. Thus we see, a loving Father receives his returning Prodigal ; neither strikes him, nor threatens him, no, nor expostulates, Where hast thou rioted and wasted thy Time and my Goods ? Uses not an harsh word to him, but meets him, and kisses him, and embraces him, and receives him with all loving affection. That's the first thing observable, the kind of the Motive.

2. Take a view of the several parts of this affectionate Motive ; contents not himself to open some glimpse of hope, and possibility of Pardon ; makes not an offer of some one of his gracious, and forgiving Attributes : but opens the riches, and treasures of his mercies ; conceals not any hint, or hold of comfort, thinks all little enough ; Either

1. To make a full expression of love in him ; Or,

2. A deep impression of hope in Us ; enlarges the Bowels of his Compassion, sets

sets out the height, and breadth, and length of his Mercy to us, summons up all his Attributes of Grace and Favour; *Gracious, merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness, he repenteth of the evil.* That's the second thing observable; The number and parts of the Motive.

3. Observe the Degrees of the Motive; See how they are all set and purposed to prevent, and remove, all the fears and discouragements, that a timorous guilty Conscience can forecast to it self.

1. We are here called upon to present our selves unto the Lord, to hope for, and expect his Love and Favour. Whose Heart will not object, that he is not worthy of so great a blessing, not having the least desert of the least Favour? True: but he is a gracious God, shewing his goodness and compassion freely, without desert. That's the first degree; He is gracious, *sine merito.* But,

2. We are not only destitute of any good deservings; but our lives have been demeritorious, sinful, offensive, deserving the contrary. True: but he is merciful, and compassionate, even against desert. That's the second degree; He is merciful, *contra meritum.* But,

3. We daily provoke him by our Rebellions, grieving his Spirit, increasing his wrath by our offences. Yet let not this discourage us, he is a patient God, forbearing his People; He is *longanimis*, a God *slow to anger.* That's the third degree of the Motive. But,

4. The cry of our sins have ascended up to Heaven, and called loud in the Ears of God; he is already offended, his wrath is kindled, his anger incensed; yet, despair not, he is easie to be entreated, he is *of great kindness.* That's the fourth ascent of the Motive. But,

5. His wrath hath smok'd out against us; his Prophets have threatned and denounced his judgments; the Decree is come out, we are all sentenced to destruction; Yet, let not this deject us; yet there is hope of mercy and forgiveness: he will reverse his Sentence, *He repenteth of the evil.* These are the degrees. Then,

1. Do thy sins discourage thee? Let the offer and invitation of his mercy assure thee.

2. Doth the number, and variety of thy transgressions dishearten thee? Consider in the second place the multitudes of his mercies, and let them perswade thee. But,

3. Doth the measure and heinousness of thy Rebellions affright thee? Let the degrees, and plenty of his Compassions comfort thee. These are the Motives.

First, Let us begin with the first part of the Text, the duty of Contrition, unto which we are exhorted; And in it,

1. The Act of Contrition is to be observed, in this word, *Scindite, Renti.* And the Observation is shortly thus much; That the act, the practice of Repentance, is no less than a Renting. A renting; and that naturally implies, and infers three things,

1. *Duritiem in objecto*; Stiffness and obduration in the Object to be wrought upon. A sinful Heart is stiff and obdurate, it needs a rending.

2. *Difficultatem in Actu*; Hardness and difficulty in the Act to be exercised, Repentance, 'tis no slight, gentle, easie performance; No, 'tis grievous and painful, 'tis no less than a Renting.

3. *Vim in agente*; It requires all the strength and might of him that undertakes it. Repentance, 'tis a *renting*.

1. *Durities in objecto*; That's the first Inference. A Sinner, not mollified and wrought upon by Repentance, he is naturally hardened, he needs a renting. St. Paul puts them both together, *Rom. 2. 5.* *σκληρότητα, καὶ ἀμετανόητον*, hardness and impenitency; they are never asunder.

Observe those measures, and degrees of obduration, that the Scripture discerns and describes in the nature of man, *Deut. 9. 6.* *They are a People, duræ cervicis,*

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That's the first Collection, our Hearts are hardned. And that implies two things;

1. *Durum non sentit.* An hard Heart is heavy and senseless. The softest Tempers are of quickest apprehension. Our brawny Hearts are dull'd and stupified.

2. *Durum non cedit.* An hard Heart, it is not yielding and penetrable of its own disposition, not admitting, nay, repelling; and (if not over-ruled and mollified by a higher Power) of it self rejecting any offer of Grace. That's the first Inference that the Act of *Renting* affords; *durities in obiecto*; the hardness of our Hearts, it needs a *renting*. And that brings in the second Observation.

2. *Difficultatem in actu*; Hardness and difficulty in the Act to be performed. Repentance, 'tis no easie, light touch of Sorrow, or weak impression of Grief, a sudden qualm of Melancholy, soon dispelled; no, 'tis deep and piercing, 'tis a Convulsion of the Soul, a racking and torture of the Heart and Conscience; 'tis no less than a *renting*. See with what terms of extremity the Scripture describes it; 2 Sam. 24. 10. 'tis a *smiting of the heart*; Acts 2. 37. 'tis a *pricking of the Conscience*; nay, a *wounding of the Spirit*, Prov. 18. 14. an *hewing and cutting off*, Matth. 5. 30. no less than *mortifying*, Coloss. 3. 5. and that the most violent and painful that can be; Gal. 5. 24. 'tis a *crucifying torment*. Zechary foretells it, Chap. 12. 10. *They shall mourn as for their only Son, and shall be in bitterness, as for their First-born; Primo-genitus, & Uni-genitus.* The loss of the First-born and only-begotten, the sorrow of it (but in those that feel it) it is inconceivable. Yet the sense of this, or any worldly sorrow, must be far exceeded in our penitential sorrow and grief for Sin; if not *affectivè*, by stirring up and enforcing our sensual Affection; yet *appretiativè*, in a judicious disallowance and abomination: if not *respectu corporalis-perturbationis* (as Aquine expresses it), yet *ratione spiritualis displicentiæ*: if not in outward bodily vexation, yet in thy intellectual and spiritual detestation, this Grief must be the greatest. Indeed so great, 'tis call'd *Contrition*, Psal. 51. 17. *A broken and a contrite heart* (saith David) *O God, thou wilt not despise.* Not only broken, but even to *Contrition*. *Aliud frangi, aliud comminui, & conteri*, saith Aristotle, in the fourth of his *Meteors*; a thing may be broken or cut in sunder, and soon set together and joyned again; *Contrition* breaks all in pieces, as *Hezekiah* the Brazen Serpent, to dust and powder. Had *Hezekiah* but broken that Brazen Serpent into some pieces, Superstition would have reserv'd a Relique, or have fodder'd it up, and made all whole. As they report of some living Serpents; cut them only into some few parcels, they will grow together again, and heal up presently; and so, do we but slightly divide and cut this Serpent of Sin, and not hack and hew it all asunder, it will easily recollect and revive it self. Repentance proceeds unto *Contrition*; not a weak *Attrition* only (as some School-men and Jesuits would moderate the matter)

matter) a faint wishing that he had not sinned, a slight fit of grieving, or some sudden pang; No, it enters *to the dividing of the soul and spirit*; 'tis the renting of the Heart-strings. *My Heart (saith David, Psal. 22. 14.) is like melted wax*; not warm'd or heat only, but burnt and melted, in the sense of his Sins. That's the second Observation, *Difficultas in actu*; Repentance, 'tis a painful renting of the Heart and Soul. And that infers,

3. *Vim in agente*; It requires a strong, violent renting. Conceive the strength of it to consist in these particular Degrees. Repentance requires,

1. *Vehementiam actionis*: A man that will set upon this main Work of Repentance, he must be all Spirit and Life; not like *Saul*, sparing the life of any of his Sins, but as zealous *Samuel*, wounding and hewing his Sins in pieces. The half-mortified civil Moralist will suppress and abate, but in no case root out and extinguish Sin. It may be, he will keep under his Sins, when of delightful Passions, they become turbulent and violent Perturbations. When his darling *Abalom* becomes a Rebel, then he can be content to subdue him; but yet, *Spare the young man for my sake*; in no case kill him: Whereas every valiant *Joab* strikes and stabs him to the Heart without compassion. In this case *S. Augustin* advises us to handle our Sins as *Job* did his Sores, violently and vehemently; *Non molli linteo, sed durissima testa*. He wiped them not gently with a soft Cloth, but scrap'd and vex'd them with an hard Potsherd. See the strength and violence of this penitential Sorrow, in repenting *David*; *I roared for the disquietness of my Soul*; *I have washed my Bed with my Tears*: His Bed, the place of his rest and quiet repose, even that's overflown with Floods of Tears. *Mine Eyes pour out Rivers of Waters, because men keep not thy Law*: If Tears of Compassion for other mens Sins were thus plentiful, how did he set ope the Flood-gates to his Tears of Compunction for his own Transgressions? That's the first step of this violent repenting; it requires *Vehementiam actus*.

2. *Frequentia actionis*; That's a second Degree. This renting and breaking of an hard Heart, requires many and frequent violent Impressions, all little enough to mollifie the Heart. In this case, it is otherwise with our natural Heart, than with our sinful; *Unico vulnere, cor hominis*; the least prick of a Wound kills the Heart of Man; deep and often Stabbings are scarce able to enter into the Heart of Sin. That's the second degree, *Frequentia actionis*. Nay,

3. *Omnipotentia actionis*; No less than an Omnipotency is necessary to Contrition. So great an Agency required to the mollifying of an hard Heart, that our own Strength is too weak. Consider how our Hearts are not only dead in trespasses and sins, but are buried in a Sepulchre hewn out of a Rock, and the Grave-stone of Habitual Hardness sealed upon them; and we may well cry out, *Who shall remove this Grave-stone from us*? Who shall mollifie and intenerate this hard Rock? The Word of the Lord must be that Hammer that can break this Stone. The Spirit of the Lord must enable *Bezaleel* to work upon this Brass. *Moses*, that had Faith enough for performance of all other Miracles, yet had scarce Faith enough to melt the Rock. And the Devil required no greater Argument of *Christ's* Divinity, than softning of Stones. And the barbarous Centurion, observing the Stones to cleave in funder, concluded certainly, that *Christ* was no less than the Son of God. No, 'tis *Digitus Dei*, and *Spiritus Dei*; no less than the stroke of the powerful Spirit can soften thy Heart. That's the third Particular. Repentance, 'tis a vehement, frequent, Omnipotent Action. That's the first Observation I gather from my Text, the Nature of Repentance, it is violent Renting.

And from it, let us briefly deduce a double Use: Is Repentance so vehement, so laborious, so tormenting an Action?

1. Then consider, *Si talis medicina, qualis morbus*? If the Medicine and Cure of Repentance be so bitter, Oh! what a dangerous Disease is the Sickness of Sin? Wilt thou swallow down that for a little pleasure and delight of thy Palate, which, if it prove not thy Bane, thou must vomit it up again with the renting of thy

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thy Bowels? Would *David* have adventured upon the pleasure of Adultery, if he had foreseen those Pangs and Tortures of his After-repentance? Would he ever have suffered himself to fall, had he ever considered, that one slip would cost him no less than the breaking of his Bones? *That the bones thou hast broken may rejoice.*

It is strange; most men make that a Temptation to Sin, which, truly considered, would be a powerful dissuasion from the least Offence, The hope of Repentance.

1. Presumption in the Wicked, that objects, I may repent, and therefore I will sin. So, it is possible thou mayst be healed, wilt thou therefore stab thy self? Nay, rather argue thus; Thou must repent, thou must be lanced, racked, and tortured with Repentance; therefore do not dare to sin: Nay,
2. Infirmary in God's Children may sometimes conceit, I shall repent, I may sin: True, thou shalt repent. *Bonum consilium sed non nunc*, said *Hushai* the *Archite*: 'Tis true Doctrine, but not seasonably applied. Cordials before Purges increase the peccant Humour. Hope of Repentance before thou sinnest, makes thee more sinful. Thou shalt repent; so did *David*, and *Peter*, and *Saul*, who went through those anguishes, those pangs and tortures of repenting Sorrow, which they would not endure again for a World of Pleasure. That's the first Use, *Si talis medicina, qualis morbus?*
2. *Si talis medicina, qualis mors?* If the Physick of Repentance be so sower, Oh, how bitter is the Death of Despair! If *Peter* wept bitterly, what an Hell, do you think, was in *Judas* his Conscience? If the Sovereign Medicine be so unpleasant, how shall we relish that Gall, that Wormwood, that deadly Poyson? If God, when he takes out the Fire and Burning out of thy Flesh, with the cool Tears of Repentance, and Oyl of Mercy; if that breeds such anguish, Oh! how intolerable will it be, to be plunged into the Flames of Fire and Brimstone? If when he heals us, and binds up our Wounds, he puts us to such smart and torture, what Torments shall we feel when his Arrows stick fast in our Flesh, and the Venom of them shall drink up our Blood? Repentance, it is a gift, *Acts* **II. 18**. If the Gift and Blessing of Repentance be so heavy, how insupportable is the Curse of Despair? To avoid that Hell, who would not undergo this Purgatory? Whose Heart would not crave and beg of God, with that devout Father, *Hic ure, hic seca, Domine, ut in æternum parcas?* Lord, burn me, and lance, and wound me in this Life, so that Despair may not torment me in the World to come. That's the second Use; *Si talis medicina, qualis mors?*

I pass on,

2. To the Object, that upon which Repentance must work and exercise it self; specified unto us,

First, In the affirmative sense; it must be the Heart; *Rent your heart*. The Observation from whence, is thus much; That Contrition, and penitential Sorrow and Grief for Sin, must be deep, settled, and grounded in the Heart. Repentance, it must be inward and hearty; and that especially for these Reasons:

1. *Ratione veritatis pœnitentiæ*; If thy Heart be not contrite and sorrowful, it is not true Repentance.
2. *Ratione usus*; Except thy Sorrow work upon thy Heart, there is no use or profit in thy Repentance.
3. *Ratione acceptationis*; Except thy Heart be humbled and cast down for Sin, it is no pleasing or acceptable Repentance.
1. *Ratione veritatis*; If it be not inward and hearty, 'tis no true Repentance. *Non est converti in toto, & integro corde, nisi in scisso*, saith *S. Bernard*; Thine Heart is not whole and sound, except by Sorrow it be rent and broken. *Non est integrum, nisi sit scissum*. How then shall we discern and know this Truth and Integrity of a broken Heart? By what Signs shall it appear, that our Repentance is hearty and true?

1. True

1. True and hearty repentance, is *Voluntaria pœnitentia*; 'tis-a willing, voluntary sorrow, and repentance. This is a main difference 'twixt that ingenuous Christian sorrow in a true Penitent, and those hellish torments in the afflicted Conscience of a despairing Reprobate. The Christian Penitent, he is *activus in pœnitentia*, provokes, and stirs up himself to sorrow; a damned Reprobate, he is *passivus in pœnitentia*; sorrow eats, and gnaws upon him against his will. Christians in their sorrow, imitate *Christ*, *John 11. Turbavit seipsum*, he fretted, and vex'd within himself, as *Lot* in *Sodom*; they vex their own spirits for their abominations; they need no Devils, (as the Penitents in Purgatory) to affright and torture them. With *Jeremy*, they wish for a *fountain of tears*; and if they grow dry, they provoke, and enforce themselves by all means possible. As *Nazianzen* often read over the *Lamentations* of *Jeremy*, that by conceiving of other mens sorrows, he might sorrow himself; As *Polus* on the contrary, bearing in his hands his own Son, conceited more deeply another mans sorrow, by representing his own; As *Aug.* on his Death-bed, painting on the Wall the penitential *Psalms*, and by them enflaming his own repentance; always praying that they might sorrow, grieving that they cannot grieve, never repenting that they have repented. That's the first note of true, hearty Repentance; 'tis *Voluntaria*.

2. *Vera pœnitentia*, 'tis *Solitaria*. True sorrow for sin, it will be secret, in privacy, and solitude; and then it works strongest. *Ille dolet verè, qui sine teste*. Players on the Stage, may howl, and mourn, and wring tears from their Eyes, and yet be mad merry fellows among themselves. *Ahab* can put on Sack-cloth, and go softly, when he spies *Elias*. And if they chance to mis spectators to see, and applaud them, their labour and sorrow, it is all lost. *Why have we fasted, and thou seest not? Isai. 58. 3.* Whereas a true Penitent, with *S. Peter*, goes out, seeks a Corner to shed tears; runs not among his fellow-Disciples to take notice of him. As *Joseph* shed his tears of commiseration, so a true Penitent his tears of contrition, in his privatest Closet. Thus *David*, saith *Saint Chrysostom* speaking of the privacy of his repentance, was *in solio regali, velut vinctus in carcere; aula regalis erat, tanquam eremi vastissima solitudo*; his Walks, Chamber, Closet, Bed, they were witnesses of his true repentance. That's a second evidence of true, hearty contrition; 'tis *Solitaria*.

3. *Vera pœnitentia*, 'tis *Perpetua*; 'Tis a continued, constant, lasting repentance. A wicked man reckons the shortest fit of spiritual sorrow to be insupportable, he cannot endure it. *Felix* at the first offer, and touch of it, rejects it instantly. Like little Children, or Mad-men, if the Physick be bitter, or un-toothsom, they fling it from them, or spill it presently. A true Penitent drinks deep of it, and sucks up the dregs. 'Tis tempered by God himself, he knows it is Sovereign. Thus *David* acknowledging the frequency, and constancy of his repentance, professes he made his tears *his food, day and night, Psal. 42. 3.* To which *S. Bernard* alluding in his second Sermon, *De Jejunio*, tells us, There is one kind of bread a Christian always feeds on, never fails from, the bread of tears; which, he saith, *David* made his ordinary standing diet. *Lachrymæ factæ sunt mihi panes, die ac nocte*. He used them not as physick, only for some extraordinary recovery, as most men think of repentance, applying it, as Papists their *Extreme Unction*, never but in case of Death; no, *David* fed upon them, and lived upon them, they were his appointed food, day and night. *Jeremy* calls it a *fountain of tears*, not a Cistern that spends it self presently; or a Winter-torrent in some great affliction, which the Summer of prosperity will soon dry up; but a *fountain of tears*, implying constancy, and perennity. Thus, saith *Chrysostom*, *S. Paul* not having any present enormities, as fuel to maintain the flame of his repentance, rather than he would abate his sorrowing, re-calls his ancient sins, past, and forgiven; *Deleta revocat, I was a persecutor, I was a blasphemer*, thereby to stir up and maintain his sorrow.

A wicked Reprobate, the least nibbling of the worm of Conscience, is intolerable to him for the least moment; he either destroys it presently, or

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or it destroys him. Christians delight to continue in it ; Even in the midst of this fiery Furnace of an afflicted Conscience, they walk, and talk, sing, and rejoyce, like the three Children ; whereas Judas, Saul, and other Reprobates, are presently consumed with the least flashes of it. A true Penitent makes this the purpose of his life, would not live, but to repent ; with *Tertullian*, accounting himself, *Nulli rei, nisi pœnitentiæ natus*, Born to repent, and never give it over before he dies. Nay, were it possible, he would mourn in Heaven. Then, at the day of Judgment, shall these penitential tears be wiped from his Eyes. He enters into Heaven with tears in his Eyes, and God must wipe them away ; of themselves they would not stay, or dry up. That's the third property of true Repentance, 'tis *perpetua*. That's the first reason why our hearts must be wrought upon, *Ratione veritatis* ; otherwise 'tis no true Repentance.

2. *Ratione usus* ; except thy heart be contrite and penitent, 'tis no useful and profitable Repentance. Outward abstinence and reformation, without the heart, is to no purpose. Thou maist prune the twigs, or hew off the boughs, but the Root keeps life in it, and will spring out naturally ; till that be deaded, hacking the bark is lost labour. We may truly say of such heartless Repentance, as the *Messalians* falsely taught of Christian Baptism ; it doth *Radere peccata, non eradicare* ; shave, or pare off sin, not kill it at the Root. Sin, 'tis as deeply fastned in the heart, as Ivy that grows and springs out of a Wall ; we may shed off the Leaves, but if we would thoroughly destroy it, and Root it out, we must dig down the Wall, and break it in pieces : So, if thou wouldst work out those *fibræ peccati*, that are fretted, and incorporated into thy Soul, thou must bruise and break thy heart by Repentance. As in curing of a sore, so here, 'tis not sufficient to wipe away the filth and corruption that issues from thy Soul, except the core of sin, which lies in thy heart, be consumed, and perish'd. That's the second enforcement for hearty Repentance, *Ratione usus* ; otherwise it is unprofitable Repentance. Contrition must work upon the heart.

3. *Ratione acceptationis* ; Otherwise, 'tis no pleasing, or acceptable Repentance. In this case, were it possible to divide the man, God chuseth like the King of Sodom, *Tantummodo mihi animas* ; God expects and accepts the heart : If the heart be absent, he accepts not either hand, or head, or the whole outward man ; but even without these, the heart contents him. Thus *David*, *Sacrificia Dei, Cor contritum* : The choice Sacrifice that is best accepted, is a contrite heart : Nay, *Sacrificia*, 'tis all the Sacrifices, represented by all, and including them all, and, in Gods account, more precious than all. *The Sacrifices of God, are a broken heart* ; without which, other Sacrifices find no more acceptance than *Cain's* oblation. We find that in *Suetonius*, *Excors Sacrificium*, the Emperours Sacrifice that had no heart, was prodigious and abominable. Sure, with God, an outward Carcass of Repentance, without the heart and spirit, 'tis no less execrable. That's the third reason for our hearts Contrition, *Ratione acceptationis* ; otherwise, no Repentance acceptable.

Thus having seen the Act of *Renting*, applied to its proper object in the affirmative part ; Come we,

Secondly, To the object negatively set down, *Rent not your garments*.

In the former, *Rent your hearts*, was discovered their inbred obduration.

In the latter, *Rent not your garments*, the Lord checks and reproves their outward Superstition. And that I resolv'd into a double sense.

1. In disjunction from the *renting of the heart* ; so it is *Sensus purè negativus* ; a plain Prohibition : Or else,

2. In conjunction together with the *renting of the heart* ; so 'tis *Sensus comparativus*, *Your heart*, rather than *Your garment*.

First, Conceive it *negativè*, *Rent not your garments*. Renting of Garments, an usual, and allowed Ceremony ; nay, often exacted, and required among the Jews, *Jer. 36. 24*. At the burning of the Book, *Jehoiakim*, and his Princes, are charged, That they *rent not their garments*. Frequently it was practis'd, in sign

sign either of horror and detestation, in case of Blasphemy; of submission and humiliation, upon any Calamity; or as an evidence of sorrow and contrition, and practice of Repentance. Serm. I.

And, in this respect, in the exercise and practice of Repentance, we may conceive it, either,

1. As a real protestation and acknowledgment of our unworthiness, by sin; of the benefit and comfort of Apparel; as fasting is a significant confession, that our sins have made us unworthy of the least repast of a morsel of Bread: Or,
2. (As others will apprehend it) As it is a voluntary stripping, and laying our selves open to the strokes and lashes of Gods wrath and vengeance. As it was usual with the *Lictores*, to rent off the Clothes of notorious malefactors; and we see it practis'd upon *Paul* and *Silas*, *Acts* 16. 22.

However, let the intent and purpose be never so significant, yet the Observation out of this negative prohibition is thus much; That all outward Ceremonious practice of Piety, if divided and sever'd from inward Devotion, 'tis reject-ed of God, without acceptance. With the Superstitious *Jew*, rent thy Clothes, the Garments of thy Body; nay, with the frantick Papist, rent thy Body, the Garment of thy Soul, they are both alike to my purpose; yet if thy Heart be free from compunction, these outward Ceremonies, though seemingly Religious, are to God abominable.

An Hypocrite (would these outsides of Piety and Devotion serve the turn) would be a compleat Christian, without exception. In Repentance, he can command his Tongue by Prayer, and Confession; his Face and Countenance, in heaviness and dejection; his Back, with *Ahab*, in wearing Sackcloth; his belly shall be afflicted with often fastings; nay, his Eyes shall afford plenty of Tears: but his Heart mean-while is as fat as Brawn, he is an utter stranger to a wounded Spirit.

What is this, but to deal with God, as *Michal* with *Saul*? When *Saul* requires *David*, he sends him a Puppet stuff up with Clothes: As the *Gibeonites* with *Joshua*, deluding him with worn Shoes, and ragged Apparel, in the habit of some travelling Pilgrims, when they were Borderers hard at hand; hoping, like *Jacob*, to lurch away the Blessing under the Vizard of counterfeit Garments: At most, if, with the Patriarchs, they can bring a Garment rent in pieces, and dipp'd in Blood, their Body lash'd, and torn in penance, Oh then *Joseph* is dead, the Man surely is mortified. *Sub istis pietatis involucris, latet sæpenumero animus valde mundanus*; under these outsides and appearances of piety, and mortification, there harbours too often Unsanctified, Worldly, and Carnal affections.

Not that outward Ceremonies and Appearances of our inward Devotion are either superfluous, or superstitious; nay, they are helpful, and useful rather;

1. By way of expression; as solemn Protestations in the Face of the Church, of that inward Disposition of our inner man.
2. By way of Impression; these outward signs of sorrow and remorse, being duly considered, reflect and work upon the Heart, and Conscience; As *Anthony*, bringing out the Bloody Garment of *Cæsar*, enraged himself and his Company against his Murderers.

Ceremonies (if accompanied with the Heart) are useful and acceptable; if divided from it, sinful and abominable. Outsides and Ceremonies, they are not *fructus*, but *folia*, as Leaves to the Tree; *In infrugifera, maledictum; in frugifera, maturitatem*. Leaves without Fruit, they bring a Curse, *Matth.* 21. Leaves with Fruit, they ripen and help forward a seasonable maturity.

Ceremonies are Garments; as Garments to a Body, so are Ceremonies to Religion. Garments on a living Body, they cherish and preserve the natural warmth; put them on a dead Body, they never fetch Life; And Ceremonies, they help to cherish and increase Devotion, in a prophane dead Heart they cannot breed it. These Garments of Religion upon an Holy Man, they are like *Christ's* Garments on his own holy Body, they have a Virtue in them; joyned with

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with a prophane Heart, they are *Chriffs* Garments on his Crucifying Murderers. Ceremonies are to Religion, as the Body to the Soul; a Body quickened and enlivened with the Soul, 'tis comely and amiable; and so are Ceremonies with inward Devotion, most beautiful: But if the Soul be departed from the Body, it becomes presently ghastly, and abominable. The Lord loaths and rejects a dead Carcase of outward Ceremonies, without the Soul and Life of inward Sanctity. those Cures prove healthy which are inward, and remove the malady from the vital parts; that's dangerous and deadly, which being outwardly applied only, smites it in again to the Heart and Spirits. Contrition of the Heart, that heals inwardly; Outward Ceremonies, Penance, &c. without the other, it strikes and drives the Disease inward. *Non sanat, sed tegit*, doth not Cure, but Heal and Skin over our Corruption.

That's the first sense, I observed; As Garments are here *Objectum solitarium*, as divided from Heart and Spirit, so it is an absolute Prohibition; *Rent not your Garments*. But,

Secondly, Take them both together, so 'tis *sensus comparativus*; rather *your Hearts*, than *your Garments*, by way of comparison. And from this Exposition, I deduce this Conclusion, That the Contrition and Sorrow of the Heart is more necessary and useful, than any outward bodily affliction. Repentance must rather work upon the Heart, than upon the Body and Outward Man. And that upon a double ground.

1. *Ratione majoris indigentiae*, The Heart needs it more.

2. *Ratione facilioris consequentiae*, Outward Humiliation naturally follows upon inward Contrition.

1. I say, the Heart needs it more. Deepest wounds must have speediest curing, and the wound of sin is deepest in the Heart. The Body is but the Weapon that gives this wound. *Membra sunt arma*, saith the Apostle; and to inflict Penance on the Body for the sin of the Soul, 'tis like those Mountebanks that lay the Salve to the Weapon, not to the Wound. *Membra sunt arma*; outward Members, they are but the Weapons of Sin; the Heart, that is the chief Rebel, and Plotter of Rebellion. Rather stab thine Enemy, than hack his Weapon. *Membra sunt arma*; the Members are but Weapons, the Heart, that is the chief Castle, and Fortrefs of Sin, 2 Cor. 10. 4. *Imaginations* are called *strong Holds*. The Victory is not ours, till the Castle be taken.

The Body,

1. *Minus peccat*; The Body, even when it sins, yet is not so sinful as the Heart and Spirit. The Heart is the Fountain and Spring of Sin; outward Transgressions are but Streams and Rivulets drained from that Head. Every thing is more full and compleat in his Principle and Original; Light in the Sun, Heat in the Fire, is more intense and vehement than scattered abroad. *Cast the Beam out of thine Eye*, saith our Saviour, *Matth. 7. 5*. Oh! *si trabis in oculo, strues in corde*; if sin be as a Beam in thine Eye, there is an huge stack piled up in thy Heart; nay, *sylva cadua*, a grown Wood, whence this Beam first grew and sprouted.

The Body,

2. *Rarius peccat*; It is not so often 'sinful. It may be innocent from outward enormities, when thy Heart is guilty of inward Rebellions. The Heart acts more in one instant, than the Outward Man can in a long time perform; as *Basil* in his Homily, on *Attende tibi ipsi*, pag. 342. *Ἄνθρωποι διὰ τὸ σωματικὸν πράττειν, καὶ χεῖρα δόσσαι, καὶ εὐκαλεῖσθαι, καὶ χαίρειν, καὶ συνεργῶν, καὶ τῆς λογικῆς χορηγίας. Ἄνθρωποι δὲ τῆς διαβολῆς κινήσεις, ἀχέως ἐνεργεῖται, ἀλόπως ἐπιτελοῦνται, ἀπερμαλυντοὶ σωλίσανται, πάντα κατὰ τὸ ἐπιπιδεῖν ἔχουσι.* All Men have not outwardly committed all sins; but every Mans Heart hath in it the Seed and Conception, and so is guilty of all Transgressions. Whence St. Paul, *Rom. 3*. charges every Man with every kind of sin; because the Original and spawn of all, lay bred in the Heart. And for these, the Heart must sue for, and obtain Pardon; as St. Aug. saith excellently of his own Soul, *Tot sunt ei remissa, quot non sunt commissa*: Or, else

else for these (though abortive conceptions) 'tis liable to Judgment. As we kill a Serpent for the venom within it, though haply it never hurt any by Poyson. Serm. I.

That's the first Reason why the Heart is Principal in this Contrition; *Ratione majoris indigentiae.*

2. *Ratione facilioris consequentiae.* Humiliation of the Body, naturally follows the Contrition of the Soul; but not so on the contrary. Thou mayest torture and macerate thy body long enough, e're thou mortifie thy Soul. Remove Objects, break off Instruments, avoid Occasions; yet, thy Heart hath a self-sufficiency within it self to commit sin. As a Mill ('tis Saint Bernard's Similitude) if you pour not in Grain and Corn to be grinded; yet, the Mill stands not still nor stays, but moves and grinds, and works upon it self: so the Heart of Man, hath that restless motion to commit sin; that deny it help from without, it conceives and practises sin in it self. *Voluntas ipsa sibi imputatur, saith Tertullian, nec excusari poterit per illam perficiendi infelicitatem, operata quod suum fuerat.*

Outward Reformation, neither mortifies, nor yet excuses the Heart. To which purpose S. Chrysostom sweetly alluding to those words of S. Paul, Gal. 6. 14. *The World is Crucified unto me, and I unto the World*, observes; it is not sufficient to have the World, and outward temptations mortified, and crucified to us, except our Hearts be crucified to them. If outward Instruments and occasions of sin be dead to thee, but thy sinful Heart alive to them, thou wilt long, and love, and desire, and mourn for the World even after it is dead, as the surviving Friend did for his dead Acquaintance; *Sed mortuus mortuum non luget.* Lay two dead Friends together, and there is no love, or lamentation. Thy Heart must die unto the World as well as the World be Crucified to thee: Outward Bodily Reformation affects not the Soul.

In this Case, it fares with the body of sin, as with the natural body; if any outward member be dead, or cut off, the life and strength runs to another: As the Athenian Souldier first grappled with his right hand; when he lost that, laid hold with his left; after that was cut off, fastned with his Teeth; his Heart was not wounded: So the body of Sin, 'till the Heart be Crucified, stop the issue of it in thine Hand, it breaks out in thine Eye; if thou pluck that out, it will find vent in thy Tongue: A stab at the Heart destroys all presently.

Outward Humiliation naturally follows inward Contrition. Physicians observe, that Passions of the Mind oft-times work more strongly on the Body, than Corporal Diseases; and so in Divinity, *Famula in culpa*, will be *Socia in poenitentia*. The Body, that attended thee in sin, will follow thee in sorrow: If the Master mourns, the Servant that attends him, follows him in black; and if thy Soul, the principal Mourner in true Repentance, if that be sad; thy Body, the Servant of thy Soul, is dejected and heavy. Otherwise, to injoyn penance to thy Body, *servum*, nay, *jumentum animæ*, thy bestial, and brute part; and to solace thy Soul, is, as if the Ninevites should have enjoyed Fasting and Sackcloth to their Beasts and Cattel; and themselves ruffled it in mirth and jollity.

Repentance observes the same Order in our Regeneration, that the Life of Nature doth in our Generation; *Cor primum vivens*; When the Heart is formed and enlivened, the Hands, and Feet, and outward man, 'tis shaped out presently: Repentance observes the same Order in our Regeneration, that the Life of Glory doth in our Glorification; It is *radicaliter in corde*, saith the Schoolman, *redundanter in corpore*; It rises in the Heart, then by a natural flux, and redundancy, shews it self in the Body. 'Tis so in the first motions, and quicknings of repentance. That's the second ground, why our Hearts should rather be affected by Repentance, *Ratione consequentiae*; outward Contrition will naturally follow.

Thus having with Elias observed the former part of Repentance, Contrition, like a mighty strong Wind renting the Rocks; listen with patience to that gentle Voice, wherein the Lord is, in the next part of my Text, which is,

Secondly, The duty of Conversion, *Return*; Without this latter, Contrition 'tis

Serm. I. to no purpose. As *Luther* said well of it, It is *fuga Dei*, and *fremitus adversus Deum*, drives us further from God. 'Tis not every *renting* that God accepts. The *contrite Heart* must be a Sacrifice; not any kind of wounding and killing, but a Religious Devout tendring, and offering it up unto the Lord. *Cain*, and *Judas*, and *Saul*, they *rent their Hearts*, but did not Sacrifice them; except to Devils. This must be a sacrificing of them to God by a sorrowful Conversion, not a cruel murdering of them by horror and desparation.

But the time forbids any further enlargement.

Here, we observe three things,

1. *Motum.*
2. *Terminum.*
3. *Habitudinem ad terminum.*

First, The kind of Motion. Repentance, 'tis a Returning. And that implies, and infers these Observations,

1. *Return*; *Ergo recessimus à Deo*. Sin, it is a forsaking, and fleeing, and departing from the Lord. In every sin, there is,

1. *Aversio*, A man turns his back upon God; And then,
2. *Conversio*, sets his Face towards the prosecution of sin.

With *Cain*, we go out of the presence of God; set our selves out of his view, and observation. As the Prodigal, must into a far Countrey, could not swagger and revel in his Father's Company. A Sinner must either securely put out his own Eyes, that he see not God; or prophanely conceit, he can put out God's Eyes that he cannot see him: (Like him, who drew the Curtain over his Father's Picture, when he sat down to Carding); or, it is almost impossible to commit sin.

With *Abraham*, walk before God; With *Enoch*, walk with God, and keep close to him; not take a turn, or two, and then part with him: but, walk constantly, and converse with him, and sin if thou canst. In this respect there is a proportion 'twixt our walking by Faith here, and our walking by sight and beatifical Vision in Heaven hereafter. Ask the Schoolmen, what's that makes the Saints *impeccabiles* in Heaven, that they cannot sin? They tell us, It is *Viso beatifica*; they always look upon the Face of God, that they cannot have the least glance, or cast of their thought to sin. Sin, it is a Departure and Forsaking of God. That's the first Observation. *Return; Ergo recessimus à Deo*.

2. *Return*; *Ergo non progrediendum*. To sin, and then sorrow; to sorrow, and then to sin again, is like desperate Debtors, wipe off the old Score, to begin a new; like unsatiable Drunkards, cast, and vomit, that they may drink the larger; or, like Popish Penitents, satisfie for the old Forfeit of Sin, and renew the Patent, and get further License. What Sorrow, and Contrition is this, but that which Devils and the Damned undergo? They have torture and anguish, and yet *immobilitati in peccato*; the burden of their sorrow sinks them deeper into Sin: they blaspheme for the smart of their wounds. That's a second. *Return; Ergo non progrediendum*; we must not go forward.

3. *Return*; *Ergo non cessandum*. 'Tis not sufficient to break off sinning, and sit still, not putting a Foot forward in this duty of Conversion. Doth *Paul* only give over his Journey to persecute the Saints, and lie still groveling on the ground? No, *Domine, quid faciam*? He turned his course, repaired to *Ananias*. Repentance, 'tis the Physick of the Soul; it must not only cure the pain, but raise up the patient, and enable him to walk and stir about. Civil, and restrained men, may exceedingly resemble the effect of Contrition, they may outwardly break off the course of sinning, but they express not the nature and virtue of Conversion; there is no Life or Motion: as Logs, they must be stirred with Leavers; or, as dead men, carried upon other mens

mens shoulders. That's a third Collection ; *Ergo non cessandum.*

4. *Return ; Ergo properandum.* Travellers out of the way, when they are set right, they make all speed to come into the Road. They that set out early, and hold straight on, may go fair and softly. We have lost time, and way ; How should we hasten and quicken our Return : Observe this in *S. Paul, I was a persecutor, I was a blasphemer ;* there is his straying, and aberration : but since, *I laboured more than they all ;* there is his haste and speed in Conversion. That's the reason, saith *Gregory,* why Angels joy more for the Conversion of one Penitent, than for the Perseverance of ninety nine Innocent, *Quia Pœnitentes, cautiores, humiliores, ferventiores resurgunt ;* they double their pace, and add wings to their speed in their Conversion. That's the fourth Conclusion. *Return ; Ergo properandum.*

Pais we now,

Secondly, To the term specified, and prefix'd, in this word, *The Lord.* And of it, we will take a double view.

1. As it hath Sin standing against him in opposition ; *Domino, non peccato.*

2. God sends upon them the *Assyrians ;* so take a view of it, as it hath the *Assyrians* under him, in subordination ; *Domino, non Assyrio ;* submit to the Lord, not to the *Assyrians.*

1. *Domino, non peccato.* Most men, otherwise ; In their seeming Repentance, not forsaking, but exchanging Sin. Doth their Conscience touch them for their Prodigality ? They betake themselves to their thrifty Avarice. Are they weary of their over-nice, scrupulous Superstition ? They run into an excessive Profanation. As those Heathen Atheists, to avoid *Πολυθεΐσιν*, they maintained *Ἀθεΐσιν*, to exclude many Gods, they admitted none. This *S. Aug.* observed in Heathenish Moralists. The *Roman* ambition suppress'd their luxury ; *Aliis peccatis alia vicerunt ;* they forsook some sins, to return to others. Are their Consciences troubled for one sin ? They think it a remedy to fall into another. In this they deal with their Souls, as the Philistins with the Ark of God ; being plagued at *Gath*, they carried it to *Ekron*, from thence they hurry it to *Askelon* ; never remembering to return it again to the God of *Israel.* *Qui sic alia peccata deplorat, ut alia committat, pœnitentiam agere, aut dissimulat, aut ignorat,* saith *Gregory ;* 'Tis either fancy, or hypocrisie ; he either mistakes himself, or would be mistaken : See this well practis'd in the returning Prodigal ; being pinch'd in one service, he doth not cast about to get a better, joins not himself to another Citizen ; No, I will home to my Father, that's his resolution, he returns to the Lord. That's the first Consideration of it ; *Domino, non peccato.*

2. *Domino, non Assyrio.* Their Conversion, and Submission must not be made to the King of *Assyria ;* he stands in Subordination, he is God's inferior. He is,

1. *Minor Deo, respectu Essentia ;* God is the more powerful ; Rather make peace with the King with twenty thousand, than with a weak a Prince, that heads but ten thousand. He is,
2. *Subditus Deo, respectu Potestatis ;* That's a greater Inferiority : Supplicate to the King, rather than to the chiefest of his Subjects. 'Tis high Treason against thy Prince, to offer thy loyalty to his Subject as thy Sovereign, as well as to revolt away to his utter Enemy. Nay, He is,
3. *Servus Dei, respectu Administrationis ;* That's a lower pitch of Inferiority ; he is God's Servant, and Instrument, his Staff, and Rod of Correction. With the Shunamite Woman, fall down at the knees of *Elisba ;* His Servant and Staff will never recover thee. No suing to *Blastus* to procure thy peace, or submitting to the Captain, while the King is offended. Not only, no returning to sin, God's opposite ; but not to the *Assyrian*, his Means, and Instrument. It cost *Asa* his life for seeking to the Physician, though Gods Instrument ; as well as *Amaziah*, that sought to an Idol, his utter Opposite. Thus *Job* never seeks to *Chaldeans*, or *Sabeans ; Dominus dedit, & Dominus abstulit ;* he sues to the Lord : That's the second point observable ; *Domino, non Assyrio.*

One

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One word,

Thirdly, Of the last thing observable; *Habitudo mobilis ad terminum*; That that orders, and byasses this motion unto the term, He is your God. And therein,

1. The Impulsive, *Tours*.

2. The Attractive, *God*.

For brevities sake, put them both together; and then conceive the use and purpose of them in a double expression.

1. By way of Direction. *Return*; To whom? *To the Lord*. Who is he? He is your God; so 'tis a Rule of Direction.

2. By way of Obligation; *Return to the Lord*. Why to the Lord? because he is your God, so 'tis a Bond and Obligation.

1. 'Tis a Direction, and that we need; we are now subject to mistake. Originally we bore that Image of his, as a touch of the Load-stone, to guide us towards him; now we are utterly ignorant, and so mistake him: our Notions of God are dark, and obscure, as *Nebuchadnezzar's* Deam; he knew he dreamt, but what it was, or what it meant, he could not remember: As Bastards, or Castaway, exposed Children, they know they had a Father, but who he is, or where to find him, they cannot tell; so, and no more do we remember, or acknowledge God: Nay, when he offers himself, and calls unto him, yet with the Child *Samuel*, we run thrice to *Ely* for once to the Lord. We need Direction.

2. It imports unto us a Duty, and Obligation; We must Return, because he is our God; *Fecisti nos propter te, & irrequietum est cor nostrum, donec redeat ad te*; As the Needle, that is touch'd with the Load-stone, hovers, and trembles till it looks towards that, and rests it self in it. I do but name it; the time forbids any further enlargement.

Let us humbly beseech him, that is the God of the Spirits of all flesh; in whose hands are the hearts of the Children of men, that as his Word hath outwardly called us to return unto him, so that his Spirit would enter into us, and draw us after him, and join us with him, and cause us to cleave unto him without Separation. This he grant unto us, and work in us, for his Son's sake.

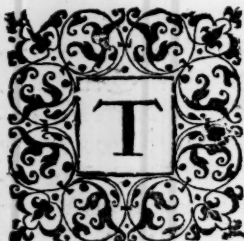


A

S E R M O N

On JOEL ii. 14.

Who knoweth if he will repent, and return, and leave a blessing behind him, even a meat-offering, and a drink-offering unto the Lord your God?



His Prophecy of *Joel*, it was directed to the Kingdom of *Judah*, in the Reign of *Hezekiah*, and *Manasses*, after the great overthrow which God brought upon the other ten Tribes by the King of *Affyria*. And in it the Prophet foretells an heavy calamity, threatens a great judgment, and destruction upon the whole Land.

And the Judgment, it is described under the representation of an Army; and that an Army of Locusts; Either thereby,

1. Intimating a succession of two sorts of Judgments;

1. Of a Famine, by a dreadful swarm of noysof Locusts that should consume the fruits of the Earth.

2. Of

2. Of War, by the power of the *Chaldeans*, that should waste, and destroy *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, and carry them Captive away to *Babylon*.

These two, the breaking of the staff of Bread, or sending among them the Sword of the Enemy, are Gods two great, and puissant Armies, against a sinful Nation; Or,

2. Otherwise, this Army of Locusts betoken but one judgment.

1. Either that of Locusts; those noysome Vermin shall come upon their Land like a mighty Army; He destroyed *Egypt* with such an Army; and *Verf. 25.* God himself calls them his *Great Army*.

2. Or else it signifies, the Army of the *Chaldeans*; and they shall come upon the Land, like a swarm of Locusts, to waste and destroy all. Thus *Isai. 7. 18, 19.* the *Egyptians*, and *Affyrians*, are compared to Bees, and Flies; *God shall hiss for them, and they shall come flying, and light upon the Land of Judah.*

Take them either way; the one is a fit Resemblance and Type of the other. The Locusts, they are Gods Army; they shall come in Battel-array, and make spoil of the Land; Or otherwise, the *Chaldeans*, they are as a swarm of Locusts; their Enemies shall break in upon them, as Caterpillars, and Locusts, and shall waste, and consume, as those Creatures do, without any resistance.

This Judgment being denounced against them, the Prophet calls the Jews to repentance; that being the only possible means to divert this Judgment. Flesh and blood indeed, when we hear of Armies of Enemies, casts out for other ways to defeat them. This seeking to God by repentance, and casting our selves upon his help, naturally we have no list to it. When the *Syrians* assaulted *Judah*, God offered King *Abaz* his help; no, he would not trouble God so much; *Noluit misericordiæ divinæ oneri esse, Esai. 7.* He would not tempt the Lord, forsooth; he was so modest, as not to be beholding to God for a deliverance; any other way would please him better. As *Dominicus Soto* tells us of a ridiculous and superstitious practice in *Spain*, to drive away Locusts. When those swarms annoy'd the Country, the Country-people would enter an Action against them in their Courts; and Proctors, and Advocates were assigned to plead for them; and then the Judge he sentenced them, and did excommunicate and accurse them. Sure, all other means without this of repentance, are of no use; they are but charms, meer mock-helps, and will not profit us. Neither Caterpillars, nor *Chaldeans*, Armies of Locusts, or swarms of Enemies, can be driven back, but by repentance.

So then the purpose of the Prophet in this Chapter, is to call them to repentance; and he prescribes a repentance suitable to their Condition;

1. To the Condition of their Sins; Their Sins were general, and national; *They had all corrupted their ways.*
2. The Judgment threatned, that was general; *An overflowing scourge*, as *Esaiah* calls it, *Isai. 28. 15.* *Sword, go through the land, Ezek. 14. 17.* *An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land, Ezek. 7. 2.* Now sure the Plaister must be as broad as the fore; so, accordingly he invites them to a general, and national Humiliation. It was to be proclaimed by the sound of the Trumpet, *Ver. 15.* not by a knock at a private mans door. The Trumpet was to call together the whole Congregation, *Numb. 10. 2.*

If ye look to the first Verse; there the Judgment comes with a Trumpet, it sounds an Alarm; it threatens all the Inhabitants of the Land. If God threatens with a Trumpet, we must call to repentance with a Trumpet, with as loud, and shrill a sound, that the whole Nation may be warned. It must be *Zephany's* humiliation: *Chap. 2. 1.* *Gather your selves together, yea, gather together, O Nation, not desired.* It must be like the Feast of Expiation, which was the yearly Fast in *Israel*, *Lev. 23. 28, 29.* all must humble themselves; *It is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you, before the Lord your God. Whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.*

Personal, and private humiliation, is not of that prevailing efficacy in a general danger. God tells the Jews, that the Prayers of two or three, though never
so

Serm. II. so righteous men ; as *Noah, Daniel, and Job, Ezek. 14. 14.* should not divert a judgment from the whole Nation : they might escape themselves ; but if the Nation repented not, the whole Land should perish. There is more must go to the removing of a general Judgment. We may spit out a spark ; or one mans diligence may quench a small fire ; but when a whole Town is on fire, every man must bring his Bucket. One mans Prayer, to remove a national judgment, is as if we should go about to quench a raging fire, by the sprinklings of a casting-Bottle. See this practised by the Jews, *1 Sam. 7. 2. All the House of Israel lamented after the Lord. And see how they expressed and testified it, Vers. 6. They gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. Their Eyes were as Buckets, their Heads Fountains of tears.*

And, is not a fire kindled among us ? How many smoking Fire-brands are scatter'd through the land ? We may say of our present sad condition, as our Prophet *Joel* speaks, *Chap. 1. 2. Hear ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land ; Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your Fathers ? Who can remember such distractions in our Kingdom ? When did this Kingdom shake and totter as now it doth ? First, troubles in the North ; when that's quenched, the flame breaks out in Ireland ; sparks are scattered among our selves ; As Ezekiel Prophecies, Chap. 7. 26. Mischief, shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour, therefore our humiliation should be general.*

Now, this duty of Repentance and Humiliation, it is press'd upon them by a double Motive ;

1. By denouncing of a judgment ; and that is not only barely foretold, but exactly described in a dreadful manner ; the more to affect them. God musters up his Forces, and sets them in Battel-array, from the second Verse, to the twelfth. The Chariots of God are twenty thousands, even thousands of judgments, and the Lord is among them, *to turn the battel to the gate.* Ey, this will work fear ; and, *Metus, 'tis Instrumentum pœnitentiæ :* Fear, it is a good ingredient into Repentance. Thus God urges his people to Repentance, by presenting of terrors, *Amos 4. 12. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel ; and because I will do thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.* Yes, God looks for this submission, that we should be startled at his threatnings. *Amos 3. 8. The Lion hath roared, who will not fear ? That is one Motive, Fear ; and that will drive us to Repentance : But then he adds,*
2. Another Motive, and that is Hope ; and that is a powerful attractive, that will draw us to Repentance. Repentance, it is a compounded thing of Fear and Hope. *Spem, metu miscet ;* it takes Motives both from Law and Gospel ; but yet it works most kindly by Evangelical means, that's hope of Mercy ; and that's the Motive of my Text, *Quis novit ? Who knows, whether the Lord will return ?*

So then, the former Motive was an affrightment to Repentance ; but this in my Text, it is an encouragement to Repentance, upon hope of Mercy. And in it observe these two things :

1. The Matter of their Hope.
2. The Measure of their Hope.
1. The Matter of their Hope ; and that is laid down in four particulars ;
 1. The first Matter of their Hope, is the regaining of Gods grace and favour towards them ; *He will return.*
 2. The second Matter of their Hope, is the recalling of his threatnings and judgments ; *He will repent.*
 3. The third Matter of their Hope, is the renewing of his Mercies to them ; *He will leave a blessing behind him.*
 4. The fourth Matter of their Hope, is the re-establishing of his holy Worship among them, that he will afford them *A Meat-offering, and a Drink-offering to the Lord our God.* That's the first thing, the Matter of their Hope ; and then follows in the Text,

2. The

2. The Measure of their Hope, how far-forth they may hope, and that is set down in a somewhat strange expression; and 'tis very considerable. Here is no full assurance; here is but an inkling, and intimation; here is not a *Door of Hope* set open to them, as *Hosea* speaks, *Chap. 2. 15.* here is but a small chink, or crevice to spy some Hope at: 'Tis but, *Si fortè*, It may be, God will be merciful; 'tis but, *Quis novit?* Who knows but he may be merciful?

Come we to the Matter of their Hope: And the

First Matter of their Hope, is the regaining of God's favour; that he will *Return*. His turning away from them, that signifies his displeasure, that he hath no delight in them, but is provoked and offended: His returning to us, 'tis the renewing of his favour, and of his good-will towards us, when he vouchsafes his Presence, and will rest amongst us.

So then, for the understanding the nature of this Mercy, this *Return* of God to us will afford us these three Considerations;

1. It is our main happiness, could we so esteem it, to enjoy Gods presence, to have him dwell amongst us.
2. It is the bitter fruit of sin, that it causeth God to withdraw his Presence, and to turn away from us.
3. It is the blessed fruit of Repentance, that it recovers God's Presence, causeth God to return graciously to us.

I. I say, 'tis our main happiness, to enjoy Gods Presence, to have him dwell amongst us. And this happiness we enjoy by Gods Presence, will appear by three advantages, which his Presence and abode, doth bring unto us;

The first Advantage, is, Gods Presence and Abode with a People: It is the holiness of a Nation, where he dwells and vouchsafes his Presence. That people by virtue of his Presence, becomes an holy Nation. All holiness comes by participation; it is not inbred in us, but must be derived from him, who is Holiness it self; and all participation comes by union with him. A people near unto him, are an holy people. *He is the holy One of Israel*; and by that near relation, *They are made an holy people unto the Lord their God, Deut. 7. 6.*

We see that this Presence of God makes a people holy, even by that Legal and Ceremonial holiness amongst the *Jews*.

1. The Land of *Israel* was called an holy Land, because God dwelt in it, and vouchsafed his Presence in it. He would not have it defiled and polluted. *Defile not the Land which ye shall inhabit, wherein I dwell; for I the Lord dwell among the Children of Israel, Numb. 35. 34.*
2. *Jerusalem*, it was called the holy City, because it was the City of the great King. God dwelt in her Palaces, therefore it was accounted a Sacred, and an Holy City, *Matth. 4.*
3. The Temple, that was an holy place, because Gods Name dwelt there; *I have sanctified this House, saith God, that my Name may be there for ever.*

All other Nations, because God was estranged from them, were an unholy people; every other Land, was a polluted Land. Here is one excellency a Nation gains by retaining God amongst them; they are more to God, than all other Nations in the World. They are a *Kingdom of Priests, and an holy Nation*. Thus we see God promises to dwell in the midst of *Zion*, *Zech. 2. 10.* and then he tells them, *vers. 2. That he will inherit Judah, his portion, in the holy Land*. For this cause, the unclean were to be put out of the Camp, *That they defile not their Camps, in the midst whereof I dwell, Numb. 5. 3.* While we retain his Presence amongst us, we are an holy Nation: If we cause him to depart from us, we become as the uncircumcised, and a prophane people.

A second Advantage we gain by God's Presence, is, That it brings with it the Glory of a Nation. It is the high dignity and renown, and honour

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of a People, that God abides with them; as *S. Paul* speaks, *Rom. 3. 1. What advantage then hath the Jew?* What is the dignity of having God so near to them? *Much every way.* Thus *Moses* sets out the dignity of the Jews, from this near reference 'twixt God and them: *Deut. 26. 18. The Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people:* And *Verf. 19. To make thee high above all Nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour.* This nearness of Gods Presence, God compares, in *Jer. 13. 11. to a Girdle, cleaving to his Loins;* *As the girdle cleaves to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me, the whole House of Israel—that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory.* So likewise *Isai. 43. 4. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee.* When God reckons up the dignities of his people, this is the main; *Pf. 87. 5. Of Zion it shall be said, that he was born in her.* Thus *Moses* re-minds the Israelites wherein their dignity consists; *Deut. 10. 21. He is thy praise, and he is thy God.* There are many titles of Honour amongst men; but this, above all, is the truly honourable Title, that we have God near unto us. *Deut. 4. 7. What Nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is to us?* While he vouchsafed his Presence to them, how renowned were they? When he withdrew himself, and cast them off, how became they a vile people, the hatred, and scorn, and contempt of all Nations?

A third advantage that Gods Presence brings, 'tis the Strength and Safety of a Nation. *Pfal. 46. 5. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved.* He calls himself, *1 Sam. 15. 29. the Strength of Israel.* *Balaam* could not fasten a Curse upon *Israel*, while God was amongst them: *Num. 23. 21. The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them.* It was this that encouraged the people of *Israel* against the *Canaanites*; *Num. 14. 9. Their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; fear them not.* Though there were Giants, and their Cities be walled up to Heaven, yet fear them not. So again, *Moses* encourages them, *Deut. 7. 21. Thou shalt not be affrighted at them; for the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God, and terrible.*

And so, on the contrary, when the people, being in a great sin, would needs go up to fight, *Moses* dissuades them; God had then withdrawn himself; *Go not up, for the Lord is not amongst you.* *Samson* wist not that God was departed from him, and the *Philistines* prevail'd over him. How did *Moses* lament, when God said, He would not go with them? So doth the *Psalmist*, *Thou goest not forth with our Armies.* His Presence, it is our *Palladium*, our Shield, and Fortrefs. *The Shields of the Earth belong unto God, Psal. 47. 9.* It was said to *Constantine*, *In hoc vinces.*

Well then, If so much good comes to us by Gods Presence amongst us, it is worth the enquiry, Wherein doth this Presence of God consist? How is he said and known to dwell in a Nation? I mean not now his substantial Presence; so he is present in all places; that Presence fills Heaven and Earth, *Jer. 23.* Nor do we now speak of his glorious Presence, where his Majesty and Glory shines, that is in the Heavens; *Heaven is his Throne:* No, nor yet do we mean his miraculous Presence, where he manifests himself in some extraordinary work of his Power; thus the *Israelites*, when they were in want, question'd his Presence; *Is the Lord amongst us, yea, or no?* No, besides all these, he hath a gracious Presence, by which he dwells amongst us. Yes, that gracious, and merciful, and beneficial Presence, is it that we speak of: How shall that appear to us?

1. God dwells in a Nation, which he chuses to be his *Peculiar people*, the people of his Covenant; amongst whom he fixes his Sanctuary, and establishes his Worship. As *David* speaks; *The Lord hath chosen Jacob to be his Inheritance.* Thus *Hosea* calls the Nation and

and Country of the Jews, *The Lords Land, Hof. 9. 3.* All the World is his Dominion: but by special purchase and possession, so the Church is his. That is like the Lords Demesne, which himself holds in his own hand. Serm. II.

2. The place of God's delight, that is the residence of his special Presence. Delight fixes a man to his abode. When we are such a people that God takes pleasure in us, then he saith, *Here will I dwell, for I have a delight in it. The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation, here will I dwell, and rest in it, Psal. 132.*
3. There are we to reckon of Gods special Presence, where he sets his Family; that is the usual place of presence and abode. Where we see God gathers to himself a Church, is daily collecting to himself a people, to know him and worship him, there we may conclude, God vouchsafes his Presence. Thus *Christ* is described, *to walk among the Churches, Rev. 1.* When it may be said of a place, as God saith of *Corinth, Acts 18. 10. I have much people in this City*, there resolve that God is present. When they grow thinner and thinner, it is to be feared God is then removing.
4. There we conclude is a place of Presence and abode, where a man bestows most cost. A Land-lord will keep up all his possessions; so doth God the World: but his chiefest care is for his Mansion-House. Do we see a people enriched with his choicest blessings? His Eyes are over them continually, no favour is too dear for them: Surely, God dwells among such a people.
5. A man is said to dwell, where his abode is most constantly. Sometimes God makes his Progress, and Excursions, into other places; as he did to *Nineveh*, by the preaching of *Jonah*: He may be sometimes, as a way-faring man that lodges for a night, *Jer. 14. 8.* He may shew some rare tokens of his being amongst them: But when he pitches his Tabernacle, where his Ordinances are constantly, and he fixes them there; that is the place of his Presence.

We have done with the first, God's presence it is the happiness of a Nation.

II. The second Consideration is, 'Tis the bitter fruit of sin, that causeth God to withdraw his presence, and to turn away from us.

1. This is the malignant effect of sin, that it parts God and us, makes a separation, moves him to withdraw and turn away from us. *He rejoices in the habitable parts of the World, and his delights are with the Sons of Men, Prov. 8. 31.* But sin and wickedness causes an alienation in him, and estrangeth him from us. Thus *Cain* complained, *I am cast away from thy face, Gen. 4. 14.* So *Saul*, upon his disobedience, cries out, *God is departed from me, 1 Sam. 28. 15. I will shew them the back, and not the face, Jer. 18. 17.* It was the woful condition of mankind, by nature we were strangers from God, nay, without God in the World. So *Paul* tells them at *Lystra*, that God suffered all Nations to walk and wander in their own ways, never owned, or regarded them. Our sins separate 'twixt God and us; and he hides his face from us.
2. Not only the World of wicked men reap this fruit by their sins; but God's own People find this uncomfortable desertion: when they grievously offend him, he turns away from them. Thus *Moses* shewed them in a visible resemblance, *Exod. 33. 7.* The People there had sinned against God; then 'tis said, *Moses took the Tabernacle, and pitched it without the Camp, a far off from the Camp*, thereby signifying God's displeasure against them, and his departure from them. Otherwise, the Tabernacle was to be in the midst of the Host, *Numb. 2.* But God was offended, and withdrew himself from them.
3. Yea, not only his visible Church, but even Gods Darling-Saints find

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this woful effect, that their Sins bring upon them, that God stands aloof off, and withdraws from them. How often doth *David* mourn for this, and pray against it? *Psal.* 10. 1. *Why standest thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest thou thy self in time of trouble?* So again, *Psal.* 38. 21. *Forsake me not, O Lord; O be not far from me.* Upon his Sin of Adultery, *O cast me not away from thy presence.* This the Saints often find and feel; if they turn unto Folly, God turns from them, stands afar off, not to hear them, not to help them, not to own them. And *Tertullian* gives the Reason, *Res delicata est Spiritus Dei*, he will not rest in a defiled Soul.

4. Some Sins of his People are of higher Provocations, and so set him off far from us. As,

1. Blood, and Oppression, and Violence; That cast off *Cain*. So God said, He would remove *Judah* out of his sight, for the Bloodshed committed by *Manasseh*. *When you make many Prayers, I will not hear you, for your hands are full of blood*, *Isa.* 1. 15.

2. A secure Neglect of God's Offers of Grace; That turns him from us. When he stretcheth out his hand to us, and we will not come in, and be reclaimed, then saith God, *I will get me to mine own place*, *Hos.* 4. 15. This cost the Spouse in the *Canticles* sorrow; when *Christ* knock'd, and still she refused to open to him, at last, *I opened to my well-beloved, but my well-beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.*

3. Falseness in his Covenant; When we corrupt that holy Religion which he hath committed to us, that turns him from us. See what that works, *Zeck.* 11. 8. *My Soul then loathed them, and their Soul also abhorred me.* God will bear with many failings; but once when we come to this height, to adulterate his Worship, ye may see what that will work, in the Case of the *Israelites*, *Psal.* 106. 39. *They were defiled with their own works, and went a whoring after their own inventions, then he abhorred his own inheritance; It made him forsake the Tabernacle in Shiloh, the Tent which he had pitched among them*, *Psal.* 78. 58. This Sin, 'tis counted spiritual Adultery; that dissolves the Marriage-knot 'twixt God and us, and causes him to turn away, and to divorce us.

4. Incurability under Means of Reformation, when God strives with us, and we resist him; It was the Case of the Old World, *His Spirit would strive no longer with them*, but he cast them off. The Prophet *Isaiah* notes it, *Chap.* 63. 10. *They rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit; therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them.* Thus God is giving over *Judah*; *Why should ye be smitten any more?* *Isa.* 1. All that labour is spilt upon you.

III. Come we to the third Consideration; It is the blessed Fruit of Repentance, that it recovers God's Presence, and causes him to return graciously to us. When I name repentance, I understand a real, cordial, spiritual Repentance; that, and that onely can regain us God's favour, and return him to us. That you may better acquaint your selves with this necessary and sovereign Duty (not to enter upon any large Discourse about it) that Duty will require of us these three Acts;

1. Humiliation.

2. Deprecation.

3. Reformation. I will exemplifie this to you by the Repentance of the *Ninevites*.

1. They put themselves to great Humiliation; *Jonah* 3. The King himself came down from his Throne, laid his Robe from him, and cover'd himself with Sackcloth; nay, Man and Beast was covered with Sackcloth, prostrating and debasing themselves before an angry God. We must put our mouths in the dust, *Lam.* 3. be ashamed, and abashed, and even abhor our selves in dust and ashes. That is their Humiliation. Next,

2. Is their Deprecation; they cried mightily unto God, *Vers.* 8. The spirit of Lamentation and Supplication must abound in us; not content our selves with our ordinary perfunctory Prayers, but we must strive and wrestle in Prayer; as it

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is said of Jacob, he had power over the Angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication to him. We must put our selves not onely to an exercise, but to an agony of Repentance. *Jacob wept.* Tears, they are *Sudor animæ*, the Sweat of the Soul in this holy Agony. Serm. II.

3. Reformation; That was a main Point in the *Ninevites* Repentance, ver. 8. *Let them every one turn from his evil ways, and from the violence that is in their hands.* Violence, that was the Sin of *Nineveh*; they were an oppressing People. It was this last, that mainly prevailed with God: See v. 10. *God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way;* and then it is said, *God repented.* He saw their Humiliation, he heard their Deprecation; but yet that which pleas'd him best, was their Reformation; *He saw,* his Eye was chiefly upon that. That is the Fat of the Sacrifice. Such Repentance is like to prevail with him; Let him be turned away, he will draw near to us again. See two places: *Psal. 38. 18. The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart, he will save such as be of a contrite spirit.* Nigh? how nigh? *Isaiah* tells, even to dwell with them; that's a constant Presence. *Isa. 56. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble.*

Indeed,

1. Repentance so pleases him, that the very imperfect Acts of Repentance, if they be true and sincere, though not according to the strict Standard of the Sanctuary, are accepted by him. *David* cried out, *Peccavi, I have sinned,* and presently God absolved him. The loving Father meets his returning Prodigal Son half way, when he was yet afar off, and but making towards him.
2. Repentance so pleases him, that the very thoughts and intendments of Repentance, be they in good earnest, prevail much with him: Thus *David* found it, *Psal. 32. 5. I said, I will confess my sin unto the Lord, and thou forgavest me the iniquity of my sin.* So God promises his People, *Before you speak, I will hear, and answer you.*
3. God is so propitious to Repentance, that even outward Repentance, if it be serious, hath some good success with him, at least for the escapal of temporal Judgments. *Ahab* was a wicked man, he sorrow'd not for his Sins, but for fear of Sufferings; yet God passed by him at that time upon his Humiliation, such as it was. So the *Israelites* Repentance, it was an unsound Repentance; yet, upon that, though it were no better, God was so merciful, *that he would not destroy them, Psal. 78. 38.*

And will you know the Reason of it?

1. It is the Property of a gracious Nature to relent upon submission and deprecation; to be *συγνώμωνος καὶ χαριολαμπρός*, not to be implacable and revengeful. 'Tis so with Men, how much more is God graciously inclined? *He is slow to anger, and ready to forgive.* Two rare Properties amongst Men. Those that are soon angry, if they be soon pleased again, we count them Good natures.

Iraſci facilis, tamen ut placabilis eſſet.

On the contrary, they go too often together, Hardly angered, and as hardly pleased: But God is hardly anger'd, soon pleas'd. with God, *Pœnitentia*, 'tis *illex misericordiæ*, it allures, and draws on, and invites Mercy. *Tertul.*

2. Especially, when the Breach is amongst Friends, then Love will be soon renewed and revived. Thus it is 'twixt God and his People, *Ezek. 16. I will remember the days of thy youth, when I first set my love upon thee.* 'Twixt God and his People there is a League of Love, and Love is soon intreatable.

3. Repentance removes the Matter of God's Anger and Displeasure. Fire burns no longer than there is Fuel to feed it. Our Sins, they are the Fuel of his Wrath; Repentance removes them, and then his Anger forthwith ceases. But,

4. Mainly, 'tis his own gracious Covenant that works all for us: The sweet Condescension of the Gospel, that makes our Repentance to be so prevalent. He hath conditioned, That if we repent, he will be merciful. We owe it to *Christ*, and his Gospel, that our Repentance prevails thus with him. The Moral Law,

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Law, the very Law of Nature requires Repentance; if we do amiss, we are bound to be sorry for it. Yet the Law exacts it as a duty, but it doth not prescribe it as a remedy; that's the condescension of the Gospel.

We have done with the first matter of our hope, the regaining of his favour. Come we to the,

Second Matter of Hope; that is, that *God will repent*. That is another gracious fruit of our Repentance, it will cause God to repent.

Surely, It is a strange thing to see God repent. Repentance, it is for man, and for sinful man. *God is not as man, that he should repent*, 1 Sam. 15. 29. Amongst men, we use to repent upon two Cases; and neither of them are incident to God:

1. When there is something happens upon our action, which is *improvisum*; which we did not foresee: that makes us repent of what we have done. Ey, but God commits no over-sights, he is not mistaken. *Known to the Lord are all his works from the beginning*, Acts 15. 18.
2. That that makes us repent, is *improbaturum*; when we do that which we do not approve, but dislike and condemn in our selves. Ey, but God's works are holy and unblameable; Why should he repent?

And yet we see the Scripture uses this language. Here, and so Gen. 6. 6. *It repented the Lord, that he had made man; and it grieved him at the Heart*. So it is said, 1 Sam. 15. *It repented the Lord that he made Saul King*. To speak properly, God hath not those motions and affections, which we find and feel in our selves when we do repent:

1. *Pœnitentia immutat*, It works a change in us. There is no change in God.
2. *Pœnitentia affligit*, Repentance afflicts us. God is not subject to any sorrowful affliction.
3. *Pœnitentia condemnat*, Repentance condemns and blames that action of which we repent. But all the Actions of God are just, and holy, and unreprieveable. How is it then, that God is said to repent?

It is a speech after the manner of men. Not that God hath the passions and affections of Repentance; but he exercises those actions, which, in man flow from Repentance. When God changes his deeds and dealings with men, then the Scripture saith, *He repents*. Repentance in God imports a change in some Effect of his, but it doth not imply any change of his Mind. *Mutat sententiam, sed non mutat consilium*, saith Gregory; he is said to reverse his Sentence, but not to alter his Counsel.

Or, take it thus; Repentance hath a double aspect;

1. It looks backward to what we have done, so it begets this thought in us, *Nollem fecisse*, I wish I had not done so. Such an act of Repentance, 'tis not in God; he is never displeased for what he hath done.
2. It looks forward; and so Repentance saith, *Nolo ultra facere*, I will do so no more. This action of Repentance, God assumes to himself, *I will punish you no more*; I will change my dealings, I will bless where I have cursed, I will promise where I threatned. We may conceive this notion in terms of Scripture. Sometimes the Scripture calls it *Repentance for sin*; that's the act of grief and contrition. Sometimes it calls it, *Repentance from sin*; when we give it over, commit it no more. Semblably, God never repents for what he hath done; but he may be said to repent from doing it again.

Yet we must not part with this sweet expression of God's repenting towards us. We may conceive it *ἀνθρωποποιῶς*, after the manner of men; yet so, as we order our expression *θεογενῶς*, as may well agree with the Honour of God.

We see that God cloaths himself with this relenting and melting affection of Repentance. Thus ye have it, Judg. 2. 18. *It repented the Lord because of his Peoples groanings*: So Amos, 7. God threatned many Judgments; and then he adds, *The Lord repented of it*, said, It should not be so, Psal. 106. 47. *He repented*

repented according to the multitude of his mercies: Let us repent according to the multitude of our sins, and God will repent according to the multitude of his mercies. *Serm. II.*

Will you see how Gods relenting, and reverſing of his threatnings, agrees with our Repentance in the ſeveral acts and motions of Repentance?

1. *Dolet*; A penitent man is ſorrowful for what he hath done. So doth God. (Still I ſpeak after the manner of Men.) He aſſumes to himſelf the regret of Repentance. *In all their afflictions he was afflicted, Iſa. 63. 9.* How doth he condole and compassionate their ſufferings? He ſeems to blame his ſeverity in puniſhing of them, *Iſai. 40. 2. Ye have received of the Lords Hand, double for all your ſins.* See how his bowels of pity are moved towards them, *Hof. 11. 8. How ſhall I give thee up Ephraim? my Heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.* That is the firſt Imitation of Repentance, *Dolet*.
2. *Abrumpit*; That's another Act of Repentance, to break off our courſe, that which we were in. Thus God aſſumes Repentance to himſelf. If he hath puniſhed, he will ceaſe from puniſhing; if he hath threatned, he will recal his threatning; if he hath paſſed a ſentence, he will reverſe and cancel it, *Jer. 26. 3.* there he deſires to repent of the evil he had purpoſed againſt them.
3. *Iraſcitur*; That's a third Imitation of Repentance. He that repents, is angry with all that provoked him to do what he repents of, or were helpers or instruments of it. Thus God doth in his Repentance towards us. All thoſe who have had an Hand in afflicting of his People, he is highly diſpleaſed with them. As a tender-hearted Father caſts his Rod into the Fire, with which he hath chaſtiſed his Son; thus God will afflict thoſe, who have afflicted his People. *I will render unto Babylon, all the evil they have done unto Zion, Jer. 51. 24. The Nation that ſhall oppreſs them, I will judge, ſaith God to Abraham, Gen. 15. 14.*
4. *Facit contrarium*. He who repents of what he hath done, will do the quite contrary; ſo God repents over his people. Hath he affrighted them with threatnings? He will reſreſh them with Promiſes. Hath he afflicted them with Punishments? He will comfort them with Mercies. *He hath wounded us, and he will heal us, ſaith the Prophet Hoſea, 6. 1.*
5. *Vovet contrarium*. A true Penitent will vow the contrary to what he hath done; bind himſelf over to better abearance: So doth God in his repentings over us. He ſwears to his People, that hereafter he will ſpare them. You have it, *Iſai. 54. 9. This is as the Waters of Noah to me; for as I have ſworn, that the Waters of Noah ſhould no more go over the Earth, ſo have I ſworn, ſaith God, that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.*
6. Repentance *duplicat contrarium*. A true Penitent will not only do the contrary, but he will do a great deal more; he will redeem his former actions by a double amendment; ſo God repents of afflicting his People. For a little anger, he will ſhew them a great deal of mercy. You may ſee it, *Iſai. 54. For a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy upon thee.*

You ſee the many gracious Expreſſions of Gods repenting towards us.

Come we now to the,

Third Matter of their Hope; that's God's renewing of his mercies upon them, *He will leave a bleſſing behind him.* Here is a third benefit we gain by our Repentance; It gives us hope that we ſhall recover his former mercies, which our ſins have deprived us of: It prevails with God, not only to free us from his Judgments, but to ſtore us with mercies. This good we ſhall get by Turning and Repenting; We ſhall not be loſers by our former ſufferings and afflictions.

See here this goodneſs of God; It is expreſſly promiſed, in *verſ. 25. I will reſtore to you the years that the Locuſt hath eaten, the Canker-worm, and the Caterpillar,*

Serm. II. lar, and the Palmer-worm, my great Army which I sent among you. Not only you shall not suffer any more annoyance by them, but you shall regain your former damage: you shall not feel the smart of former Judgments; but the plenty you shall enjoy, shall make you forget your former losses; It shall be contrary with you, than it was with Pharaoh's Dream; here the full and the fruitful Ears of Corn shall consume the blasted; the fat Kine shall devour the lean Kine; the years of Plenty, shall make you forget the years Scarcity.

These are the welcomes that Repentance finds at God's hand. He doth not barely set us *In statu quo*, but he betters our condition. Thus the loving Father, entertaining his returning Prodigal, *Luke 15.* he not only receives him, but kisses him, and embraces him; not only cloaths him, but adorns him; not only feeds him, but feasts him. Here is the Kiss, and the Gold-ring, and the rich Robe, and the fatted Calf, and Musick, and Rejoycing. This is the *Superpondium* of mercy, the overplus of mercy. This is *Dos Pœnitentiæ*, the Dowry of Repentance. Where God pardons, he doth not only take off his judgments, but brings on plenty of mercy upon them. *Is this the manner of man, O Lord?* We count it fair favour, to escape a deserved punishment; but God deals over and above, He loads us with mercies.

And the manner of Expression is to be observed:

1. It is called, *A blessing.*
2. It is, *A leaving of a blessing behind him.*

1. I say, 'tis called *A blessing.* Se how Repentance will purifie and refine our language: Prosperity, and Peace, and Plenty, they were our own before: We could speak in *Esau's* stile, *I have enough*; or in *Nabal's* language, *My Bread, and my Flesh*; 'tis either Nature's bounty, or the fruits of our Labour; all of our own acquiring. Thus we over-possess what we do enjoy; but when we repent, the Prophet will teach us to call them as they are, *Blessings of God from his holy hand.* Our Peace before, it was the wisdom of the State, or the dread of our Enemies, or our own riches and strength; but after a Judgment hath been upon us, Repentance will teach us from whom we must have it, to whom we must ascribe it. It makes us look up to Heaven, and give God the glory of it. Repentance will teach us to set a right estimate of our plenty and prosperity; not so much to own them as Comforts, as to love them as Blessings: That's to take the right comfort of them, as they are Fruits of God's Love, Pledges of his Favour, Seals of our Reconciliation.

2. It is called, *A leaving a Blessing behind him.* It implies two things:

1. *Ordinem Benedictionis*: What's that? First, he hopes for favour in Gods gracious return to them: Then, after it, he hopes for fruits of favour, and a supply of other blessings. Yes, this is the right method of Repentance; first, and above all, it labours for, and aims at the recovering of God's favour; *Pardon my sin, Lord cast me not away from thy Presence, return to us in mercy, and loving-kindness, own us as thy People, take us for thine inheritance*: then, after that, we may hope for, and expect any other favours. A true Penitent, prizes God's favour better than life it self, or the means of life; other mercies of plenty and prosperity, Faith and Repentance accounts as accessaries, and additions. It is an unworthy love, to love God for his blessings, and not for himself. A true Penitent speaks to God, as *Mephibosheth* did to King David, *Let Ziba take all, now the King is returned in Peace.* Let the Worldlings enjoy plenty; here is the main comfort of a true Penitent, *God is returned to my Soul in Peace.* This Expression, *He will leave a blessing behind him*; it shews,

2. *Successionem Benedictionis.* Though he doth punish and chastise us, yet here is our hope, *He will leave a blessing upon us.* 'Tis a Penitent's comfort, that God reserves mercy till afterwards; that his anger, 'tis like a Land-flood, *Non durabit ætatem*; that the rod of the wicked shall not always rest upon his inheritance; that he will do good to us at the latter end, after our afflictions. *The end of that man is Peace, Psal. 37.* Here is the contrary vicissitude in God's dealings with the wicked; there is a great difference betwixt these two ways of God's proceedings;

proceedings; To begin with a Judgment, and to end with a Blessing, that is his Childrens Portion; and, to begin with a Blessing, and to end in a Judgment, that's the Lot of the Ungodly. They shall suck up the Dregs of God's anger. Sodom may have a fair Morning, a chearful Sunshine at the beginning of the day, Gen. 19. 23. but the day ended in Fire and Brimstone: But the Church may have a foul Morning, but the Sun will break out upon them; they shall have a fair Evening; God will leave a Blessing behind him. Come we now to the

Fourth Matter of Hope, that's the re-establishment of Religion, and God's Worship amongst them; That we may have to offer, a Meat-offering, and a Drink-offering, to the Lord our God. 'Tis a pregnant Speech, and contains many Particulars; I will name four of them:

1. It is *Finis Liberationis*; 'tis the End we should aim at, in seeking Deliverance from any Affliction, That we may appear in his Temple, and worship our God with an holy Worship. It was the End that *Hezekiah* set to himself, when he prayed for Recovery out of his Sickness, 2 Kings 20. 8. *What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of the Lord?* Then we ask Peace and Safety to purpose, that we may enjoy the opportunities of serving God. *Zachary* teaches us this Lesson, *That being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.* S. Paul teaches us to pray for our Governours, that we may live in peace and quietness. Stop there, will the worldly man say: No, S. Paul adds, *In all godliness and honesty.* Peace without Piety, it is a Carnal Peace, and it will not last long. *Pax*, 'tis *Sepimentum Ecclesiæ*. Peace, it is God's Hedge about his Church: If his Service prosper not, he will break down the Hedge, take his Peace from us.

A Meat-offering, and a Drink-offering, to the Lord our God,

2. It is *Fructus Pœnitentiæ*; 'tis the Fruit of Repentance. Meat-offerings, and Drink-offerings, they were Sacrifices of Thanksgiving: When are they in season? When we have appeased God by Repentance, then our Services and Sacrifices shall be accepted. We must *Placare*, before we can *Placere*. Till we be reconcil'd, and in favour with God, all our Oblations are Abominations; but, Repent, and then God will accept thine Offerings. An impenitent Sinner, is as if he blessed an Idol, when he prays; but the Prayers of a penitent Soul shall be accepted.

A Meat-offering, and a Drink-offering, to the Lord our God,

3. It is *Dedicatio Benedictionis*; They hope for a Blessing of Plenty and Prosperity; and if they obtain it, see, they will devote it to his Honour and Worship. Yes, this is a right way to obtain a Blessing: Devote it to his Service; let him have the Honour, and then thou shalt have the Comfort of it. Saith *Parisenfis*, As a Landlord lets out his Ground to halves; let God have the Glory, and then thou shalt have the Profit of his Blessing.

Peace and Plenty, every man wishes for it; it is every mans Prayer. Ay, but where are thy Vows? Dost thou promise to God to serve him with his Blessings, and to consecrate them to him? Imitate *Hannah*; She prayed for a Son, and she devoted him to the Lord. The failing of this, brings a Forfeiture upon all. Deut. 28. 47. *Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things, therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies in hunger and want.*

A Meat-offering, and a Drink-offering, to the Lord our God,

4. It is *Solicitudo Pietatis*; It argues an holy Care for God's Publick Worship, that it be maintained, and plentifully supported. God challenges the Jews for neglecting of it, when they returned from Captivity; They said, *The time was not yet come to build the Temple*, Hag. 1. 2. they would stay till they had store; build their own private Houses, but let God's House lie waste. Where is *Ezra*? What's become of *Nehemiah*? Have we no *Zerubbabel*, that takes care of God's Worship, before all other Cares? And is it not our fault? We observe the Logician's Rule, but in a wrong way, *Primum in intentione, is ultimum in executione*;

Serm. II. *executions*; the Establishment of Religion was the first in our Promises, but we see 'tis last in our Performances. But true Piety prefers God's Service before all our Seekings. 'Tis the study of pious men, if God will be good to us;

1. God shall have the Glory of it.
2. He shall not have a Verbal Glory, but it shall be with Cost too.
3. And we will provide not onely for a Present, but for a Perpetual Worship.

Tantum de materia.

Come we now to the other Particular of the Text; We have seen the Matter of their Hope, now follows the Measure of their Hope, and that is somewhat strange: 'Tis but a cold Encouragement, one would think; puts all their Hopes upon a Peradventure; 'tis but *Quis novit? Who knows? It may be so*; that's all the Assurance.

1. It is a strange Speech, seemingly contrary and inconsistent with God's Goodness. 'Tis the excellency of every Good-nature to be ready to pardon, and to be entreated. *Jonah* thought God too ready to pardon; *I knew thou art a merciful God, and wouldst forgive presently.* O the King of *Israel* is a merciful King.

2. It is inconsistent with his present Invitation of them to Repentance. And doth he prescribe Repentance at peradventure? Who prescribes Physick so? Take this Medicine, who knows but it may do thee good?

3. It is inconsistent with his present Encouragement, *v. 13.* There he reckons up all his sweet Attributes, *The Lord is gracious, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repents him of the evil*; and now he seeks to cross all, and so disheartens their Repentance by a *Quis novit?*

4. It seems contrary to his absolute Covenant, and Promise to pardon Penitents, *Ezek. 18. If the wicked do that which is right, he shall live.* 'Tis the Fundamental Promise of the Gospel.

And yet we see this manner of Expression, by, *It may be, Who knows?* This is sometimes used by God in the Scripture. I find four places wherein it is used, besides this in my Text:

1. The first is, *Jonah 3. 9. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?* Well, you will say, This was the Speech of an Heathen King, one who was unacquainted with the ways of God, and his gracious dealings. Well, to mend that, there is,

2. A second place, in *Dan. 4. 27. Break off thy sins, if it may be a lengthning of thy tranquillity.* That was the Speech of the Prophet *Daniel* himself; but yet it was to a wicked and prophane King. Well, there is yet,

3. A third place, that goes higher; *It may be that the Lord God of Hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph,* *Amos 5. 15.* That's a Speech of a Prophet, and to God's Visible Church; and yet for all that, it is but a *May be, Quis novit?* There is yet,

4. A fourth place, *Zeph. 2. 3. Seek the Lord, ye meek of the earth; it may be you shall be hid in the day of the Lord's wrath.* That's a Speech of an holy Prophet, and to holy Men. *The meek ones,* *Calvin* renders the Saints, *They who have wrought his Judgments, done righteously*; yet 'tis but fortasse to them; but an half, suspensive Promise: 'Tis but *Quis novit?* 'Tis but, *It may be you shall be hid.* That's a strange Promise. What saith *S. Augustine?* *Si Deus fortasse non perdet malos, sine dubio non perdet bonos; potius illud eligamus, ubi dubitatio nulla est;* in *Psalm 77.*

What shall we think of this Speech? Surely this inkling and intimation of Hope, it may be useful;

1. It shews us *deliquium spei*, the Faintings and Faltrings of Hope upon some Sins. As we strengthen our Sins, so we weaken our Hope. Great Sins are hardliest pardoned. As *S. Peter* spake to *Simon Magus*, *Repent*, said he, *of this thy wickedness, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* Gross Sins make great gashes into the Conscience; we can hardly attain to full assurance that God will pardon them.

2. It

2. It shews *Magnitudinem periculi*; We may come to such a case, be brought to so low an ebb, beset with so many miseries, that there is but small hope of delivery. It made *Amos* cry out, *By whom shall Jacob arise?* *Amos* 7. *for he is small*, brought so low, that there are small hopes to recover, *Son of man, can these dead bones live? Lord, thou knowest.* In such a case, any hint or inkling of hope will be some comfort to us.

3. This kind of Speech, *Quis novit?* 'tis *remedium contra desperationem*. As this Speech doth not fully assure us, so neither doth it wholly reject us. If we be past hope, we grow presumptuous, and resolve to sin; as they in *Jeremy* 18. 12. *They say, There is no hope, we will walk on in our own evil ways.* It is the lowest degree of hope; if we have no more, yet hold this fast; *I will wait and pray; if I cannot get Assurance, yet I will not cast away my Hope; God may be gracious.* This is one degree of hope, to know that God is intreatable, and Sin is pardonable, and Mercy is attainable, and Hell is avoidable. Part not with this hope, lest thou fall into desperation.

4. This Speech, *Quis novit?* it shews *incertitudinem beneficii*. The Judgment that is threatned is a temporal Judgment; and for the avoiding of that, the most we can make of it is. but a *Quis novit?* We are not sure to escape it. Indeed for spiritual Judgments, upon our Repentance, we may know and be assured to escape them; but Deliverances from temporal Judgments have not so certain a Promise. What saith *David*? *Thou forgavest them, O Lord, and yet thou didst punish their own inventions.* It was so with the *Jews*: The Sins of *Manasseh* upon his Repentance were forgiven him; but yet for all that (even after *Josiah's* Reformation) God would not spare *Jerusalem* for those Sins of *Manasseh*, but cast them into Captivity: No stronger are our hopes for temporal Prosperity. As *Jonathan* said to his Armour-bearer, *It may be the Lord will work for us,* 1 Sam. 14. 6. Or as *Josuah* of his own prevailing for his Inheritance, *Josh.* 14. 12. *If the Lord be with us, I shall prevail, and drive them out.*

5. This Speech, *Quis novit?* it shews *gravitatem peccati*. What Sin is that? The Violation of his Covenant, when we deal falsely in that; the forsaking of his Religion, the embracing of a false Worship, the chusing of a new God; that, that puts his People into a sad Condition. Who knows that he will be merciful to such a Sin? We have nothing to relieve us but this *Quis novit?* We cannot then plead for Mercy by the Tenure of his Covenant. In some Sins, we may sue out our Pardon of Course, by virtue of his Covenant. So saith *S. John*, *If we confess our sins, God is faithful;* not onely merciful, but faithful. We have his Covenant for it; but if we falsifie his Covenant, and forsake it, that breaks off our hold. It was so with the *Israelites*; when they made and worshipp'd the Golden Calf, what saith *Moses* to the People? *Exod.* 32. 30. *O you have sinned a great sin, peradventure I shall make an atonement for you.* It was but *peradventure*; he could give them no better assurance. And what saith he to God? *verse* 33. *If thou wilt forgive, forgive;* as if he should say, I cannot plead for Pardon, I can onely beg for it; *If thou wilt forgive, forgive.* That's the last Particular, *The Measure of their Hope, Quis novit?*

Serm. I.

A

S E R M O N

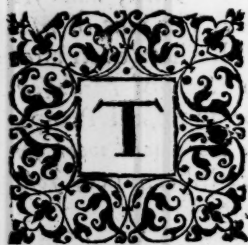
On PSAL. lxxviii. 34, 35, 36, 37.

When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God.

And they remembered that God was their Rock; and the high God, their Redeemer.

Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.

For their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.



His Psalm, we may term it a Psalm of Record, or a Psalm to bring to Remembrance. It is an holy Panegyrick, or Song, for the whole Nation and People of the *Jews*; a solemn Recital of the many memorable Passages in that Common-wealth, from their first Settlement. And it hath been the Wisdom of Kingdoms and Common-wealths, to have their *Chronographos*; those who should Record and Register the several Passages and Affairs of their State; to keep upon Record their Beginnings and Foundations, their Acts and Monuments, the good and ill Events that have betided them. And accordingly, the Wisdom of God hath authorised and employ'd his Sacred Pen-men and Secretaries, to Enroll and Register up the several Passages of his Church, and to transmit them to Posterity.

In particular, Besides those Sacred Annals of his Church, contained in the Historical Books of Scriptures, the Holy Ghost hath purposely framed some more summary and compendious, but yet full and perfect Relations of the Affairs of his Church; and those likewise composed and framed into Songs and Psalms, to make them more fit Carriage for Memory; and that, by the pleasantness of them, they might sink more deeply into their Hearts, and more strongly affect them.

Thus *Moses*, after all his Sermons and Commemorations made to the People in *Deuteronomy*, of God's Dealings with them, and their Carriage towards him, at last he composes a Song, and sings it to the People, and commends it to Posterity, as a lasting Monument for all Generations, *Deut. 32*. Thus the Poets among the Heathen, whom, in *Titus*, *Paul* calls their Prophets, had their *Carmina secularia*, their State-songs, comprising the Affairs of their Common-wealth. Answerably, that Sweet-Singer of *Israel*, the Prophet *David*, is studious to frame such sacred Songs: As, first, this present Psalm; so again, the Eighty ninth; then, the Hundred and fifth, the Hundred and sixth, the Hundred and seventh; all Songs and Psalms of Publick Commemoration. *David* doth that which the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of, *Chap. 5*. *I will sing to my Well-beloved, a Song of my Well-beloved, touching his Vineyard.*

I termed it a Psalm of Record, or of Commemoration; and so it is, if we respect the Materials of which it consists. It is a Recital of God's gracious Dealings towards his People, and of their ungracious Dealings towards him again. But yet I find another Name given it by the Psalmist. It is called *Maschil* in the

Title

Title of the Psalm: And that Name respects the End and Purpose of it. *Maschil* is a Psalm to give Instruction. It is not onely Historical, but Doctrinal. Even these Historical Parts of Scripture, are not onely God's Day-Book, to tell us what hath passed afore; but they must be to us as a Law-Book, to teach us what we must do; not onely Reports, but Presidents, and Laws. It is not onely a Psalm to bring to Remembrance, which is the Title of the Thirty eighth, and Seventieth Psalms; but *Maschil*, a Psalm for Instruction. Serm. I.

1. When he commemorates his ancient Mercies to their Forefathers, that's *Maschil*, a Psalm of Instruction. *We have heard with our ears, O Lord, and our Fathers have told us, what Works thou didst in their days, in the times of old.* What's the Instruction of that? It should teach us Confidence in God, *That they might set their hope in God*, ver. 7.

2. When he commemorates their ancient Deliverances from Persecutions and Enemies, that is *Maschil*, a Psalm for Instruction, to look for the like Deliverances from him in our Dangers and Distresses. *Psal. 106. Many a time did he deliver them.* Ver. 47. *Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the Heathen.*

3. When he commemorates the wicked and ungracious Courses of their Forefathers, that is *Maschil*, a Psalm of Instruction, to avoid their Fathers Sins: Ver. 8. *Not to be as their forefathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.*

And this Instruction was not onely for them, that the after-ages of the Jews should make a profitable use of the former Times; but it reacheth to us Christians: St. Paul tells us, that the time of the Jews concerns us Christians: *Rom. 15. 4. Whatsoever things were written before-time, were written for our learning.* And again, *1 Cor. 10.* there he acquaints them what befel the Jews; then adds, ver. 6. *These things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust, as they also lusted:* And then, ver. 11. telling them of the Judgment that befel the Jews, he saith, *These things hapned to them for examples, and they were written for our admonition.*

So then, this Psalm sets forth the great Disobedience and Stubbornness of the People of *Israel* under God's Government.

1. It upbraids them with Forgetfulness of his Mercies.
2. It objects to them their Unproficiency and Unreachableness, even by Miracles.
3. It reminds them of the profane abuse of his Patience.
4. It reproves them for their Incurribleness by his Chastisements.
5. It shames them with the Falseness and Unsoundness of their hypocritical Repentance.

The Text, it contains this last; and so take the Purpose of it to be God's Censure and Reproof of the Jews unworthy Repentance. And in it, observe these two Particulars;

1. Is the several Acts of their Repentance; Then,
2. The many Defects and Faults of their Repentance.

The first will shew us how far they went in the Practice of Repentance.

The second will discover their Faultrings and Failings, how much they came short of a true, spiritual, saving Repentance.

First, The Acts of Repentance, which here they performed, they are five.

1. Seeking; *They sought him.*
2. Returning; *They returned.*
3. Inquiring; *They inquired early after God.*
4. Remembring; *They remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer.*
5. Renewing their Covenant with God; that's implied in ver. 37. *They were not stedfast in his Covenant.*

Secondly, The Text sets out the Defects of their Repentance, how much they failed in it: These are four. The

First Defect and Fault of their Repentance, It was untimely; a foreslowed and delay'd

Serm. I. delay'd repentance: that's implied in this word, *When*; not till such a time; then, not till then. The

Second Defect and fault of their Repentance, is, that it was enforced Repentance, not ingenuous and voluntarily undertaken; it was extorted by Plagues: They repented when they were under the rod, nay, under the Sword; it was, *When he slew them.* The

Third Defect and fault in their Repentance, That it was an unsound Repentance; not true, and sincere, but feigned and acted only: It was a flattering, and lying Repentance; *They flattered him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.* The

Fourth Defect and fault of their Repentance was, that it was a momentary, transitory, unsettled, unconstant repentance, not firm and lasting; *Their Heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.*

These four faults;

1. Untimely, and backward;
2. Enforced, and extorted;
3. Unsound, and dissembling;
4. Vanishing, and unconstant.

And these four are usually link'd together, one draws on the other. These four twists, make up *Esfay's Cart-rope of sin.*

1. He that puts off, and procrastinates, and delays Repentance, he will never bethink himself of it, or set himself to it, till some judgment awakens him, and constrains him to it.

2. He that repents not, but by constraint, and when he is under the lash, usually, if he look not well to it, it will be but a shew of Repentance, some outward humiliation, and no better: And then,

3. Unsound Repentance, will never prove lasting repentance; he will be soon weary of it, and return to his former ways again.

Come we to the

First, and here briefly take a view of the Acts, and Exercises of their Repentance; *Seeking, returning, inquiring after God, remembring of him, and covenanting with him.* Actions, all of them, in their own nature good; all of them, if rightly performed, penitential acts, good ingredients into Repentance.

Put them together, they are such acts as accompany Repentance, and they will afford us a double Meditation.

The first Meditation arises by way of Supposition.

The second, by direct Position.

I. By way of Supposition; these actions of *Seeking, Returning, Enquiring, &c.* acts, and duties, and exercises of Repentance, they all suppose the quite contrary actions that accompany our sinning. As thus;

1. When we repent, then we set our selves to seek God; therefore when we commit sin, then we part with God. Repentance, that's a seeking, therefore sin and wickedness, that's a losing of God.
2. In Repentance, there is a returning to God; 'tis a work of Conversion; therefore in our sinning, there is a departing from God, and a forsaking of God, that's more; Forsaking is more than losing.
3. In Repentance, there is an enquiring after God; therefore in a course of sin, and before we repent, we never think of him, but slight and neglect him.
4. In Repentance, there is a remembring of God, and of his mercies; therefore by sin, we do not only actually think of him, but we grow in a forgetfulness of God, we have no remembrance of him.
5. In Repentance we renew our Covenant with him; therefore by sinning, we break and forfeit, and, as much as lies in us, we disannul our Covenant with him.

These five evil effects of Sin, take notice of them; by sinning against God, we lose him, we never so much as think of him, nay, we remove him out of

of our memory, we utterly forget him, nay, we break our Covenant with him. *Serm. I.*
 Here is the Condition of a stubborn and a wilful Sinner. A man that lives, and lies in ſin, he doth wretchedly caſt off all communion with God, rejects and abandons him. Though he may have ſome vaniſhing notions of God, yet to all good purpoſes he is an arrant Atheiſt, *without God in the World*; no intereſt in him, no effectual cogitation of him.

This eſtimate the Scripture puts upon a wicked people;

1. It calls them forſakers of God, *Iſai. 1. 4. Ah ſinful Nation, they have forſaken the Lord.* So *Jerem. 16. 11. Your Fathers have forſaken me.* Saints are a generation of Seekers, ſo theſe are a generation of Forſakers.

2. It calls them Departers from God, *Ezek. 6. 9. They have departed from me with an whoriſh Heart.* So David deſcribes a wicked man, *Pſal. 18. 21. I have not wickedly departed from my God.* There is a wicked departure. The Apoſtle forewarns them of it, *Heb. 3. 12. Take heed of an evil heart; to depart from the living God.*

3. It calls them Revolters, *Iſai. 31. 6. The Children of Iſrael have deeply revolted*; and *Jer. 6. 26. They are all grievous revolters.*

4. It repreſents them as thruſting God from them; *Iſai. 30. 11. Cauſe the holy One of Iſrael, to ceaſe from before us.*

5. And for matter of Enquiry, or Thought, or Remembrance of God, the Scripture makes this the mark and guiſe, and character of a wicked man, to lay aſide all thoughts of God. *The wicked through the pride of his Countenance, will not ſeek after God, God is not in all his thoughts, Pſal. 10. 4.* God is far above out of his thought; he ruſhes at the name of him. Pharaoh ſaid that which every wicked man thinks, *Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord. Te that forget God*; a wicked mans deſcription, *Pſal. 40. All the Nations that forget God, Pſal. 9. 17.*

It ſhould beget ſome ſad thoughts in us. Were there nothing elſe in Sin, no after miſchievous conſequences following upon it, it ſhould ſtrike upon the Heart of obſtinate ſinners; What? while I live in ſin, am I no better than an Atheiſt? Is this the fruit of all my courſes? do they utterly eſtrange me from God? I loſe him and the thought of him, and the remembrance of him. Yes, that thou doſt. Thou mayſt go for a Chriſtian, and be reckoned amongſt the people of God, and ſeem to own him, and to be acquainted with him, but while thou liveſt in thine impenitency, thou art wholly eſtranged from him.

Even the Children of God in their failings, and infirmities, they find theſe ſad effects partially, and in ſome degrees. Not a fault that they commit, but it ſets them off ſome degrees from God. It weakens their hold of him, they loſe him in part, it abates their union with him; they forſake him in part; it dims their thought of him, it dulls their remembrance of him. But a wicked man in an impenitent courſe, hath all theſe miſchiefs in extremity.

That is the firſt Meditation, the Suppoſition. The next is,

II. By direct Inference, and Poſition. And this is the Meditation; That true Repentance will enforce upon us, a ſeeking of God, whom by ſin we have loſt; a returning to God, whom we have forſaken; an enquiring after God, whom we have neglected; a remembring of God, whom we have forgotten; a renewing our Covenants with him, which we have broken.

I. It will put us to a Seeking; and that is,

1. An act of eſtimation; it values that which it ſeeks. If we count it as good loſt as found, no great matter whether we hit, or miſs, there will be no ſeeking: if we meet with it by chance well and good; but lightly valued is but ſlightly ſought for. It muſt be a precious Pearl that the Merchant ſeeks for, *Matt. 13. 45.* When we come to this reſolution; If I miſs of God's favour, I am undone; if I find it again, I am made for ever; then we ſeek as we ſhould, becauſe we value it as we ſhould. *Thy favour is better than life it ſelf, Pſal. 63. 3.* See how David valued it, *Pſal. 28. 1.*

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Psal. 28. 1. Be not silent to me, lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the Pit. 'Tis death to miss him; better than life to find him. It will put us to a seeking, and that is,

2. An act of diligence. Search implies labour and anxiety, and all possible endeavour. Such are the seekings of Repentance; not a few sluggish wishes, but it will be active and industrious; it lights up the Candle, and sweeps the House, *Luke 15.* A penitent Soul will give no rest to it self, till it hath recovered God and his Favour. That's the seeking God will accept. *Jer. 29. 13. Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your Heart;* not like the lazie seekings of the Spouse; *In my bed by night I sought him; I sought him, but I did not find him:* but when she gets up into the Streets among the Watchmen, then at last she finds him. That's the first.
2. Repentance, it will put us to a returning; it will make us tread over all our steps, and strayings, and wandrings from God with sorrow, and regret, undo what we have done afore, do the quite contrary. It will make us resolve with the Church in *Hosea 2. 7. I will go and return to my first Husband, for then was it better with me than now.* So again, *Hof. 6. 1. Come let us return unto the Lord.* 'Tis called a *Conversion*; a full and pregnant word.
 1. Not a meer Aversion from some sin. Repentance, 'tis not a meer cessation, and giving over what we did before, and there rest. A man that is out of his way, recovers not himself by a meer step, and stay; no, he must go back again.
 2. 'Tis not a meer Diversion; give over this sinful course, and turn into another; I will be no more prodigal, but, I will fall to some other carnal, or sensual practice. Here is *alia semita, sed eadem via*; a keeping of the same rode still, though you change the track. But,
 3. 'Tis a full Conversion; that brings him to the first point, from which he strayed. This *Jeremy* directs, *Chap. 4. 1. If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me.* It brings a man round about, makes him quite another man.
3. Repentance will put us to Enquiring. That is a busie word. Inquiring, and searching diligently, *St. Peter* puts them together, *1 Pet. 1. 10.* Our Saviour calls it *Seeking, and asking, and knocking.* 'Tis a consulting with others, who can direct us. Thus the Penitents in the *Acts* of the Apostles, *Chap. 2. 37.* enquired of *Peter and John, Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* help, and direct us. So the Penitent Jaylor, *Acts 16. Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* the Prophet *Jeremiah* shews them this duty; *Stand in the paths, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way?* and *Isaiah* quickens them to this enquiry, *Ch. 21. 12.* bids them enquire of the Watchmen; and what say they? *If ye will enquire, enquire ye, that is, do it, and do it again, do it to some purpose.*
 1. Enquire of the Guides that God hath set up.
 2. Enquire of those that have strayed, and wandered, and lost him, and now have found him; what course took they? And,
 3. It must be early; *Take the wings of the morning.* Early beginnings may do much. *Isaiah* gives us this Item; *The Watchman saith, The morning comes and also the night, if ye will enquire, enquire; Return, come.* The days are short, the morning spends, the night hastens. Early seekers, seldom miss. Late beginnings most what fall short.
4. Repentance, it will quicken our memories; *They remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer.* It will make us re-call to mind all the good ways of God towards us. Thus the revolting Church of *Israel*, when she bethinks her self of returning to God, she recounts how well it was with her, when she kept her self to him. *Hof. 2. 7.* So the returning Prodigal, *Luke 15.* he remembered the plenty of his Fathers House.

This remembring of Gods gracious dealings with us, hath great force in the work of Repentance.

1. It will upbraid us of our base unthankfulness, *Dent. 32. 6. Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?* Serm. I.

2. It melts our hearts into remorse, and sorrow. *Oh! the love of Christ constrains us.*

3. It encourages, and puts heart into our repentance; *I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.*

5. Repentance will cause us to renew our Covenant with God; that's implied in *Verf. 37. They were not stedfast in his Covenant.* That's the true and principal work of Repentance, it makes us enter into new Covenants with God. Initial repentance, that first enters us into the Covenant with God; we engage, and bind our selves over, by solemn Covenant, to become his Servants: Then, our renewed repentance, that bewails the breaches of our first Covenants, and binds us to him by new Engagements. A sinner is a Covenant-breaker with God; and a true penitent makes up those breaches, and puts upon himself new bonds of obedience.

Here is the right method of Repentance; Not only bewail thy particular sin, into which thou hast fallen; but remember, thou hast in thy Baptism entred Covenant with God. Mourn for the violations of that, recal to mind that great and solemn Engagement.

Thus, when the people of *Israel* rebelled in the Wilderness, God commanded them to return to the Red-Sea again. They were *Baptized in the Red-Sea*, as *S. Paul* speaks: Now that they had fallen from God, God recalls them thither again, to bewail the breach of Covenant, that there they made with him. The remembrance of that Covenant, must work us to Repentance. Renew that again, not in the Ceremony, and Sacrament, but by thy new purposes, and promises of better Obedience. In this sense, a Christian must be an *Hemerobaptist*, wash himself every day in that holy Laver.

We have seen the Several Acts, in which their Repentance consisted; Now follows, the

Second thing observable; that's the failings, and defects of their repentance, that made it unacceptable. And they were four?

1. It was fore-slowed, and untimely;
2. It was extorted, and enforced;
3. It was false, and hypocritical;
4. It was momentary, and inconstant, and fickle.

1. It was untimely, a delayed repentance. First they sinned; *vers. 10. They kept not his Covenant*: again, *vers. 17. They sinned yet more*, still they went on. Yet again, *vers. 32. For all this they sinned still*: whiled off, and delay'd, and set back their repentance. Even this is a malignant circumstance, breeds a great flaw and blemish in our repentance, the late date it bears. Oh! repentance should be a timely, a speedy, and an early work.

1. 'Tis presently due, as soon as we have sinned. So, *Ratione officii*, by the law of right Reason, a man is bound to be sorry as soon as he hath done evil. It is Gods Due, and he demands it presently. Even in Lending, *Solomon* bids us not *put off till to morrow*; much more in paying thy debts.
2. 'Tis good repenting betimes, *Ratione incerti*. Do it while thou maist do it, while we have time: *In the morning sow thy seed, Eccles. 11. 6.* Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. Hereafter, *Repentance may be hid from thine eyes*. We all pretend our resolutions are to repentance; we grant we must repent; and resolve to repent before we die. Be it so. Be sure thou repent before thou die, and then thou must repent speedily; for, time to come, is a most hazardous uncertainty. The Jews have a rule, He who vows to do any thing before he dies, he must do it speedily out of hand, because he is not certain whether he shall live till to morrow; and then his Vow is broken, and he must answer for it.

3. 'Tis good repenting betimes, *Ratione facilitatis*. Timely repentance is

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the most kindly, and gentle, and easie repentance. A wound is best taken, when it is green; defer to dress it, and it will rankle, and fester. A bone is best put into joynt, as soon as it is out; neglect it any time, it will hardly keep in. Repentance, 'tis the physick of the Soul; and physick you know, is best taken in a Morning. Thus Peter went out presently. *When I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh, Jer. 31. 19.*

Ey, this is the failing of these mens repentance; 'tis all dilatory, posted off as long as may be: It shews,

1. They took little pleasure in it.

2. They came unwillingly to it; as a Bear to the stake, who must be fetch'd about, with a ring in his Nose; they were not led to it by any inward principle of grace, but upon other inducements, or enforcements rather.

But yet there is one word in the Text, that seems to set a timelier date upon their repentance; 'Tis said, *They enquired after God.* How can this stand with this procrastinating *When? Mane properabant;* so Calvin; In the morning the hastned; *Diluculo veniebant;* so others, By day break.

True, true; All this takes not off the charge and imputation of late repentance.

1. Is't not a Sarcasm, an holy scorn, and derision, of their slow, and sluggish, returning unto God? Yes, yes; after so much time wasted, and mercies abused, and provocations multiplied, now you bestir your selves; Is this your early return to God? So shaming their backwardness in this needful duty.

2. The Scripture, even in the same place where it upbraids sinners with delays yet then uses this term of early seeking, *Prov. 1. 24. Because when I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; therefore, ver. 28 they, then shall call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.* Here are two extremities, very late, nay, too late; and yet early. Such conversions then have an Early, and a Late; or rather, a late, an an early; an Evening, and a Morning.

1. They have *Vespertinum culpæ*; Look at time of their sinning; Oh! 'tis very late ere they repent; all the day long, and they never thought of it. But then,

2. There is *Matutinum pænæ*, The morning of their punishments. When Gods judgments break in upon them, then they bestir themselves. Take

their time of sinning, so it is *Vesperis*: Take their day of suffering, so it is *Manè. Serò quoad culpam, Citò quoad pœnam.*

3. Or, they seek and enquire early, and yet very late. That's early, and or *manè*, when a man awakens. The Sluggards morning, when he breaks off sleep, that may be at Noon, or Night, in true computation. Security lays a sinner in a deep sleep; when Gods hand awakens him, that's his morning; till then, he was asleep. That's the first fault, *Untimely.*

II. A second defect of their repentance, is, That it was enforced: *Cum occideret, When he slew them,* and his judgments fell upon them, then they bethought themselves and turned to him. That's a second malignant circumstance, that marrs their repentance. Till then they never thought of him. Many other times there were, that would have better become their repentance; much better than this, *When he slew them,* and fell upon them with a destroying judgment:

1. *Quando peccarunt*; As soon as they had sinned, had they any grace, they should have repented. I told you before, Repentance is presently due, as soon as we have sinned. God calls all delayers, fools. *O ye fools, how long will ye love foolishness? Prov. 1. 22.* As Tertullian, God *Dedicavit penitentiam in Paradiso*: So the time as soon as ever Adam had sinned, God summon'd him to repentance. Wisdom and Grace would have us do so. Thus it was with David, when he numbered the people, presently his heart smote him; he saw his fault, and sorrowed for it.

Well, suppose they took not that first time; there are more intermediate times before he came to slay them:

2. *Quando*

2. *Quando benefecit eis*; When he did good to them; that should *Serm. I.*
reclaim them.

1. They sinned, and yet he ceased not from blessing them.
2. They murmured, and yet he blessed them.
3. They tempted him, and yet he fed them.
4. They would pose his Power, whether he could fetch water out of the rock, and he did it for them.

Oh! that's high time for repentance, when Gods goodness wrestles, and strives with our wickedness, and would overcome us. *Luther* tells us of a man, wicked and yet prosperous. *Vicisti me, Domine, nimis bonitate tua.* He overcame him with love, *S. Paul* charges it deeply upon impenitent sinners, tells them, It makes them inexcusable, *Rom. 2. 4. Despisest thou the riches of his goodness, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

There is another time, when they should have repented;

3. *Quando invitavit*; When by the Ministry of *Moses*, and *Aaron*, he found fault with their sins, and called them to repentance. That sure is a just time for us to repent, when Gods Word calls us to repentance. 'Tis that which *Christ* commends in the *Ninevites*, *Matth. 12. 41. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this Generation, they repented at the Preaching of Jonas*; No sooner did God dispatch a Prophet to them, to call them to Repentance, but they yielded presently, *in auditu auris*. One look of *Christ* made *Peter* weep bitterly. It was that which *S. Paul* takes comfort in, in the matter of his Conversion, *I was not disobedient to the heavenly Vision, Acts 26. 19.* It was that also that commended the Conversion of those Penitents, *Acts 2. When they heard this, they were pricked at the heart.* One Sermon of *S. Peter* reclaims them presently. The Ministry of Gods Word is the great sanctified Instrument to work us to Repentance.

Yet there were other Opportunities, that in all reason they should have taken to repent, though they slighted the former; That's,

4. *Quando castigavit*; When he did visit their sins with more moderate, and Fatherly chastisements. We know, God had his Ferulae, and Rods, and Fatherly Corrections, with which he did visit them; Hunger, and Drought, want of Bread and Water. The Wilderness in which he led them was a School of Afflictions. And therefore in allusion to that, Afflictions are called a *Carrying into the Wilderness*, *Hos. 2. 14. I will bring her into the Wilderness, and there speak unto her heart.*

'Tis the usual way God takes with us; when his word alone will do us no good, to write our Lessons on our backs with his Rod. Prosperity makes us wanton, Affliction oftentimes hunts us in, and brings us before him. Sickness, and Poverty, and Losses, and other uncomfortable Events, they are usual means to reclaim us. *Hosea, Chap. 2. 6. compares afflictions to an hedge of thorns*; *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns*, so that you shall have little left to break out. Thus was *Manasseh* converted; Captivity and Imprisonment wrought him to repentance, *2 Chr. 33. 12. When he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers.* It was *Luther's* speech, *Schola Crucis, Schola Lucis.* And it is the great aggravation of wicked King *Ahaz*, *2 Chron. 28. 22. In the time of his distress, did he trespass yet more and more against the Lord*; this is that King *Ahaz*; that's his brand; as if he should say, Here is a sinner, whom Affliction will not tame. 'Tis to great purpose that *Solomon* advises us, *Prov. 3. 11. My Son, despise not the chastening of the Lord.* Gentle Corrections must not be despised, nor slighted. And *David* his Father counted it an happy thing to get good by such chastening, *Psal. 94. 12. Blessed is the man, whom thou chastisest, and teachest him out of thy Law.* He shews it will prevent this same Occideret, *That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until they be digged for the wicked, vers. 13.* Happy chastisements, that prevent slaying? To do as *Isaiah* speaks, *Chap. 26. 16. Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a Prayer, when thy chastening was upon them.* No, this wrought not with them, *Quando castigavit.*

Serm. I. So then, here is the unworthy servile baseness of their Repentance; no time, serve but *quando occidit*; when he slew them; never till their heads were on the block. Yes, this is *Pharaoh's* Repentance; he stood out many a stroke; but when it came to a destruction, then he seeks to *Moses*, *O I have sinned, save me from this death only*. We condemn it in *Pharaoh*, and wonder at it here in the *Israelites*; and yet upon examination, we shall find, it is the case of many of us. Take it,

1. Either more collectively and largely, for our national Repentance; Or,
2. More privately and personally for each mans particular.

1. Let us look abroad; not to censure and descant upon other mens estate, but yet we may soberly consider the sins of the times, and lay them to heart. Have we not passed all the former *Quandoes*, the Seasons of Repentance with small Amendment?

1. Not when we sinned; God knows may sins stand upon the Score, uncanceled by Repentance.

2. Not when he blessed us with Deliverances, with Peace, Plenty Freedom from Annoyances; yet small fruits upon it. *Evidentibus Beneficiis ingrati*.

3. Not when he hath by his word invited to Repentance; Nay, that *Mannah* comes out at our Nostrils, we begin to loath it. Yea, begin to question whether God speaks by us.

4. Not when he hath chastised us in measure, shot off warning Pieces, rather than murdering Cannons; Commotions, and Plagues, and odd belabouring unnatural Discontents: we despise those Chastisements.

5. When he comes to slay us, then we will bethink our selves: When the Kingdom is on a light Fire, and Invasions of Enemies, or intestine rebellions begin to destroy us; then it is to be hoped we will repent.

2. Let us take it more privately, and personally, and then ask your hearts what time you set for your Repentance? It is, *cum occidet*, when we are on our Death-beds, and no hope of life; when God sends his last Executioner, to cut us off from the land of the living, then we resolve to repent. Well, 'tis possible, you may do so; *De nemine desperandum, quam patientia Dei sinit vivere*. Yet consider,

1. It is *Infamis Penitentia*; here is a brand set upon it by the Holy Ghost.

2. It is *Incerta*; There is small encouragement the Scripture gives to it, rather rejects it. See what entertainment such Seekers are promis'd to find at Gods hand; *Prov. 1. 26. Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded, verse 26. I will also laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear comes. When distress and anguish comes upon you, verse 28. then they shall call upon me, but I will not answer.* See what encouragement such early Seekers have.

3. It is *Suspiciosa Penitentia*; there is great cause to suspect the goodness of such Repentance, which is forced from us, *cum occideret*, when the fear of death surprises us. A man may deceive himself in judging his Repentance. In great affliction, he may promise fairly, and think he hath good and honest purposes to forsake his sin, that he is mortified to it; because,

That lust which reigned in him is nipp'd, and forc'd back by his affliction: 'tis like the sap of a Tree in Winter, all shrunk to the Root, Sorrow, and Sickness, and any great affliction, is like Winter Weather, it nips the Branches, hinders our Corruption from sprouting; and so we think 'tis dead; but the Root holds life and sap. A Warm Weather of Prosperity will make it spring again; like *Job's* tree, *Cap. 14. 8, 9. Through the scent of waters it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.*

In the fear of death, or any sore afflictions, we may take our selves to be mortified, because afflictions will juggle out temptations of sinful pleasures; he hath lost the relish of them for a time: As sick men can find no sweetness in

meats,

meats, which otherwise they delight in; because their taste is for a time embittered. Let them recover health, and they will fall to again, Serm. I.

3. In sickness many take themselves mortified, not because Sin is weakened in them, but nature is infeebled; that withdraws her strength by which sin was active: recover nature, and sin will recover. As a graff in a Tree, let the Tree spring, and that will spring too. 'Tis not the body of sin that is mortified, but the body of nature is infeebled. Put not thy Conversion then upon such hazardous adventures; stay not till he comes to slay thee by death. It is an infamous, 'tis an uncertain, 'tis a suspicious Repentance; thou mayest be mistaken in it.

Come we to,

III. The third defect of their Repentance, that's falseness, and dissembling; it was a flattering, unfound, hypocritical Repentance. *Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lyed unto him with their tongue.* All their conversion and turning to God was but flattery and falshood. And this Flattery and falshood will appear.

1. In their Professions.

2. In their promises; Flattering Professions and false Promises.

1. Flattery is seen in Professions;

1. A Flatterer will profess a great esteem of goodness and worth in the Person whom he applies himself to; ready to ascribe much unto him: So did these hollow Converts; In their Affliction, they acknowledged, *God was their rock, and strength, and the high God their Redeemer,* verse 35. Thus the *Herodians* flattered Christ, *Matth. 22.*

16. *Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, and regardest no mans person.* Christ discovers them, *Why tempt ye me, ye Hypocrites?* Such are the soothing of unsound repentance, when affliction presses us. Oh! then we will acknowledge God, and his goodness; As *Benhadad* did with the King of *Israel*, *O the Kings of Israel are merciful Kings;* but yet false and treacherous for all his profession: when he recovers his strength, he will renew his War with him.

2. Flattery is seen in profession of great love, and affection. *Judas* his kiss, a testimony of great love, as if Christ were dear to him. Such Professions hypocritical repentance will make under Affliction. Such love *Ziba* shews to *David*; professed great love and loyalty to him. The Jews had such blandishments to God-ward, *Isai. 29. 13.* *They drew near him with their mouth, and with their lips did honour him.* In our extremities, who but God, and Christ are in our mouths? then we seem much to affect them.

3. Flattery is seen in profession of sorrow for any offence. A Dissembler to escape his due deserts will confess all, and profess great sorrow for former offences. Thus did railing *Shimei* to *David*; Oh, who so sorry for his offence, who so submits in confessing it? *2 Sam. 19. 18.* And such professions an Hypocrite under the lash will make to God. The *Israelites*, when thunder and lightnings were about their ears, *O we have sinned in asking a King, besides all our other sins,* *1 Sam. 12. 19.* These are flattering Professions.

2. As they flatter'd in their Professions, so they were false in their Promises. Repentance will make Vows and Promises; and so will this false and counterfeit Repentance abound in Promises. Ask *Pharaoh*, If God spare thee this time, will thou let *Israel* go? O yes, No longer stay. An Hypocrite will go about to bribe God with Promises; *Spare me this one time, I will become a new man;* yet all false. A double Falseness;

1. False in Intention; He says what he never means, his tongue contradicts his heart.

2. False in Performance; He never makes good what he saith.

David

Serm. I.

David calls it a lying, fained Obedience, *Psal. 66. 3. Through the greatness of thy power, shall thine Enemies yield fained obedience unto thee; False and Counterfeit.*

So then, In that these Jews were thus false and fraudulent in their repentance; it will discover unto us the dangerous condition of this sin of Hypocrisie, in three strains of Hypocrisie:

1. See the guile of Hypocrisie; Rather than fail, it will counterfeit and act any duty, though never so unacceptable, as Repentance is. No duty in Religion goes down so hard with an Hypocrite, as Repentance. Repentance is a shaming duty; A penitent must confess, and acknowledge he hath sinned, take shame and confusion to himself; cry with the Leper. *I am unclean.* Now Hypocrites are, *Animalia Glorie*, all for their Credit and Reputation. In matter of Opinion, they are in no Errour; *Quod volumus sanctum est.* What? Are we ignorant and blind also? *Joh. 9. 40.* In matter of Conversation, they are without spot or wrinkle; *You are they which justify themselves before men. Luke 16. 14.* It is hard to bring them to acknowledge either errour or fault; But yet, if it makes for their turn, they will even act a penitential part, and confess, and recant, and seem to be sorry for sin. So did *Simon Magnus*, and King *Saul*.

2. See the pertinacy, and obstinacy of Hypocrisie; It will act, and counterfeit, and not give over, no, not in the greatest affliction. *Cum occideret*, when Gods hand is slaying them, yet then they will counterfeit. Neither mercies, nor miracles, nor chastisements, nor plagues, will alter or change him. Let favour be shewed to him, yet he will not learn righteousness; Nay, Let Gods hand be lifted up, yet they will not see it. *Isai. 26. 10.* Of all other sinners, an Hypocrite is the most hopeles, and incorrigible. Afflictions have brought home prophane sinners; but an Hypocrite will stand out that too; either accuse God for afflicting him, or dissemblingly accuse himself, like some desperate Cutpurse that will steal in the Sessions House, or at the Gallows.

3. See the stupor, and brutish sottishness of Hypocrisie. It will not only undertake to deceive men, but God also; think to mock him with flatteries, and lies, As *Abaz*, how did he cover his infidelity? *O he would not tempt God.* What saith *Isaiah*? *Isai. 7. 13. Is it a small thing to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?* An Hypocrite will not only fault with men, seek to delude the World, but, they are lying Children to God, *Isai. 30. 9.* Thus *S. Peter* charges *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, that they lied not to men, but to the Holy Ghost, *Acts 5. 4.* Thus *Isaiah* brings in the Hypocrites of his time, boasting even to God, of their hypocritical service and devotion, *Isai. 58. 3. Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest it not? Wherefore have we afflicted our Soul, and thou takest no knowledge?* Indeed Hypocrites are in truth, secret Atheists, They turn the glory of God into an Idol, so hoping to put him off with Vizards, and Counterfeits; worse than *Jacob* towards *Isaac*, God can neither see, nor feel, nor find out their mockeries.

That's the third, the falseness of their Repentance.

Come we to,

IV. The fourth defect of their Conversion and Repentance, It was momentary and unconstant, *Verse. 37. Their heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.*

And this clause comes in as a proof of the former 'tis a Conviction of their unsound and hypocritical repentance. And here is a double Conviction, by which an Hypocrite may judge of himself. Their repentance was false and fained.

1. Because it was not hearty. True repentance is hearty repentance. If the heart be wanting, it is counterfeit and hypocritical: *Their heart was not right with him.* Their repentance was false and fained.

2. Because it was not lasting and durable; *They were not stedfast in his Covenant.*

1. It was Hypocritical, because it was not cordial and hearty. How was it not hearty? were they not in earnest? was it meer out-side, acted, pretended repentance? 'Tis likely not. There is a double Hypocrisie;

1. Formal, and exprefs, when he that acts it, intends only to counterfeit, *Serm. I.*
means nothing else. That's grofs Hypocrisie. Such were the Pharisees in *Christ's*
time, and the World is full of them. Hardly can we think a man in such a Case
as these Israelites were now in, at the point of death, would be so grofs, as to
mock God exprefly.

2. There is Hypocrisie of a finer thread, that's interpretative Hypocrisie;
Such an Hypocrisie wherein we deal fallly with God, and our selves too: such
as God will judge Hypocrisie. How's that? when a man rests in some acts of re-
pentance. but yet fails, and falls short in the main, and is careless of that. As.

1. There are some actions of repentance, as confession of Sin, calling
for Mercy, promising Amendment; these are good, but yet more is required.

2. There are some affections, and passions of repentance; as sadness,
and sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, dejection of mind, and other passionate mo-
tions; these also are good, but yet fall short.

3. What then is wanting? The main of all is, that the heart must be
changed. I say, changed. It may be affected, dejected, and troubled, and yet re-
main as bad as ever. So it was with *Pharaoh*; the terrours of God deeply affected
him. So *Ahab* was strangely cast down upon *Elijah's* threatnings; was sad in
good earnest. And what think you of *Judas*? was not he much affected? But
yet, no true change was wrought in their hearts; they were the same men still;
Pharaoh an Oppressor in his heart, *Ahab* a Persecutor.

Here then is that which makes up repentance to be true and spiritual, and
such as God will accept; when it puts a new heart into us, changes our natures
from what we were before, begets in us new resolutions, that we chuse what we
refused, love what we hated; frames the very heart anew. In this case, Hypo-
crisie works like Art, sincerity like Nature. How is that? Why Nature's work
begins within, frames the inward of a man: first the heart, then shapes the out-
ward members, so doth Sincerity; But Art, that works upon the outside, alters
the figure and outward lineaments, goes no further, so doth Hypocrisie.

Judge thy conversion by this trial; Art thou another man? a new frame put
into thee? hath God taken away thy stony heart? so, thy prophane, or covetous
or proud heart? and given thee an heart of flesh, &c?

2. A second Conviction of their unsoundness of repentance is, that it was a
flitting, momentary, unconstant repentance; *They were not stedfast in his Covenant.*
That's a second Conviction. True repentance will prove lasting repentance;
Hypocritical repentance is slippery, and unconstant.

A true Convert hath an inward principle of repentance planted into him;
Grace is a second Nature, and works constantly, as nature doth; but an Hypo-
cite in his actions of reformation and repentance, is moved, not by an inward
principle of God, but by some outward motive. When that ceases, his conversion
fails. The motions of Piety in a good Christian, are like natural motions; the
motions of an Hypocrite, are as artificial motions. The motions of the Sun, and
the motions of a Clock, keep time alike; and for a time, we will say, the Clock
goes as true as the Sun. Ey, but here's the difference, the one moves out of an in-
ward principle, naturally; the other, the Clock, is moved by an outward princi-
ple, the weight, and plummet makes it go; and when that is down, the Clock
stands still: Or, as in Waters, a natural Stream flow always, it is fed with a
Spring; but a sudden Land-flood, though it runs strongly for a while, yet it will
dry up, it hath no Spring, or Fountain to feed it.

A great difference 'twixt affectation that will tire; and affection, which will
hold out: A great difference 'twixt passion, which is sudden, comes and goes; and
fixt resolution which is constant. An Hypocrite is like an unbroken Horse, he
may strike a stroke or two right, but falls to his trot. Sudden flushings of heat
are one thing, and the kindly warmth at the heart is another. A good Christian
is the same out of affliction, that he is in affliction. An Hypocrite, Oh! he is
a new man on his sick-bed; recover him, and ye discover him as covetous,
as prophane as ever. In affliction he vows, in prosperity he forgets his vows.

What

Serm. 1. What faith David? *My heart is fixed, O Lord, my heart is fixed, Psal. 66. 13. I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.* In his repentance, he hath renewed his Covenants with God, and he will not break with him. Failings he may have, but yet he revolts not; trip he may, but yet recovers. *David's resolution is his, I will never forget thy Commandments; for by them thou hast quickened me.*



A

SERMON

Isai. 26. 9.

— When thy judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteousness.



His Chapter is stiled by the Prophet *Isaiah, Canticum, A Song, Vers. 1. In that day shall this Song be sung in the land of Judah.* A Song, penn'd and prepared for the people of God against their return out of Captivity. The Prophet not only forewarns them of it, that they must all be in bondage to the King of Babylon; but foresees, and assures them they shall not perish there, but they shall be brought back again into their own Country.

Thus the Prophet, placed in *Excelsa Fidei specula*, in Faith's Watch-Tower, foresees their miseries, and foretells their deliverance. And this prediction of their deliverance is framed into a Song; that, as the occasion will be comfortable, the matter triumphant, so it bespeaks suitable affections, chearful and joyful thank-givings unto God. *Thus light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart, Psal. 97. 11.* In the midst of all troubles and afflictions, yet there is a Seed-time, and there shall be an Harvest of Joy, and Comfort. *Esay*, he sows this Seed in Promises, and, in Gods good time, they shall reap the Harvest in a full Performance.

This Song consists of many sweet strains; 'Tis partly Eucharistical, a Psalm of Thankfulness; and partly Didactical, *Maschil* (as *David* terms many of his Psalms) a Psalm, or Song, to give Instruction. And the Text belongs to this second sort; 'Tis a strain of Instruction. This well learned, and practised, will make the other strain seasonable unto us. Let us first learn righteousness, by Gods just judgments; and that will bring us to a condition of Joy, and Thankfulness, for his merciful Deliverances.

The Text, it shews us what use we are to make of Gods Visitations; what's the profit, and improvement we must make of our sufferings and afflictions. They are *revelari*, they are so many lessons, and instructions to us; and we must undergo them accordingly, and learn righteousness by them.

So then, the Text recommends unto us this Truth, That the Land of Affliction, 'tis and ought to be, the School of Instruction. And herein we may consider two things:

1. *Doctorem.*

2. *Discipulam.*

1. What is that that must teach us; that is, our Afflictions; they are our Instructors.

2. What

2. What we must learn by them; We *must learn righteousness by them*: That's *Serm. I.*
the Discipline and Instruction we must receive by them.

First, Let us consider what's that which much teach and instruct us; They are our Sufferings and Afflictions. And they are here described unto us in a threefold Notion;

1. In their Nature and Propriety, what, and whose they are; what we must esteem our Afflictions to be; they are no other than *Gods judgments*.
2. They are described by their Time and Season; that's implied in this Particle of Time, *Quando, When*.
3. They are described by the circumstance of Place, where they are inflicted. That which God makes the School of Correction, that's the Earth. *When thy judgments are in the earth.*

Consider their Nature and Propriety. Afflictions and Calamities, they are *Gods judgments*. It is a point of Piety, to know and acknowledge this Truth, That whatsoever befalls us, all our Sufferings, Personal or National, God is the Author of them; 'tis his hand that inflicts them: And the Prophet *Jeremiah* makes it a point of Wisdom to acknowledge this, *Chap. 9. 12. Who is a wise man, that may understand this? — for what the land perisheth.* It is great wisdom to know from whom, and for what our Afflictions are come upon us.

1. It is an acknowledgment that God expects from us. He looks we should see him in all our Sufferings, and observe his hand in them. *Hear the rod, and who hath appointed it, Mica. 6. 9.* and know whose hand it is that brings it.

2. He challengeth these Afflictions to himself, as his own special administrations. *Is there any evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it? Amos 3. 6. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things, Isai, 45. 7.*

3. He takes it hainously, as a great indignity offer'd to his Providence, that we will not acknowledge him in all our Sufferings. Our Prophet complains of it, *vers. 11. Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see it; give no testimony to his just proceedings.* See what construction God makes of this; he accounts it no better than a reproach, and slander cast upon him. *Jer. 5. 12. They have belied the Lord, and said, 'Tis not he.* In all our Sufferings, it must make us confess with old *Eli, It is the Lord*: and conclude of our Affliction, as *David* did of Promotion, *It comes neither from the East, nor from the West, nor any other point of the Compass; but, In the hand of the Lord; there is a Cup, and he reacheth it tous, and pours it upon us.*

A necessary Truth it is, and yet we are exceeding backward to learn it. And this backwardness in us, is grounded upon two difficulties:

1. This acknowledgment, it is *Confessio Fidei*; and all men have not this Faith, to see and discern our calamities and miseries from whence they come. Many feel the rod, that cannot hear it; feel the smart of it, that cannot apprehend who hath appointed it. With *Belshazzar*, we can see the Hand-writing upon the Wall, but we cannot read it, and understand the meaning of it. As the Jews, when God spake from Heaven, *John 12. 29. They said, it thundered*; it was but a rattling in the Sky, they made no more of it: So, a natural man without Faiths prospective, can hardly look so high as to the hand of God. The evil we suffer, 'tis but some distemper in nature; or the malice of men; or, if it be more immediately from God, then it is chance and fortune, any thing rather than God, that doth afflict us. Whereas Faith and Piety overlooks secondary causes, and fixes upon God. *Job* neither mentions *Sabeans*, nor *Caldeans* in all his losses, but acknowledges God in all his sufferings: *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away.* This made *Joseph*, when he was shamefully entreated by his unnatural brethren, acknowledge to them, *Non vos, sed Deus*; 'twas not you, but God, that sent me into *Egypt*.

2. Men are exceeding loth to acknowledge their sufferings to be Gods judgments, upon another difficulty; 'Tis *Confessio reatus*; it bewrays our guilti-

Serm. I.

ness; it carries with it an acknowledgment, that all is not well 'twixt God and us, but that he is become our Enemy, and fights against us. Now naturally we are very unwilling to think that God hath any quarrel against us. It is a deceit which we are exceedingly subject unto. Prone we are to delude our selves with this false perswasion, that God and we stand in good terms. How hardly could *Samuel* dispute *Saul* out of this delusion, and make him confess there was a breach 'twixt God and him? We are very desirous in all our afflictions, if it be possible, to prove that God is not the Author of them, but some other cause: *Judiciis Dei detrahimus, ne peccatores nos esse cognoscamus*, saith *Salvian*. As *Pharaoh* laboured a long time to prove that God sent not those plagues upon him, but that *Moses* wrought them some other way; his Inchanters could do as much as that came to. It is no easie matter to make us acknowledge, either our doings of evil to be sins against God; or our sufferings of evil, to be judgments from God. *Thy judgments*, saith *David*, *are far out of his sight*; that makes him tush, and puff at all his afflictions.

So then, the point is briefly thus much; the evils and calamities which we suffer they are *Gods judgments*; 'tis our duty so to esteem them, to acknowledge them Acts of Divine Justice. And that will draw from us three other Acknowledgments, and clear justifie Gods proceedings from three Imputations.

Are our afflictions *Gods judgments*? Then,

1. They are deserv'd by us; God doth justly inflict them upon us, *Sine iniquitate*.
2. They are advisedly decreed, and wisely ordain'd; he brings them upon us, *Sine temeritate*; he doth not cast them upon us at all adventures, and unadvisedly.
3. They are proportion'd in a just and holy manner, with a due measure and moderation; he sends them upon us, *Sine furore*; not in rage and fury.

1. Our miseries and afflictions, they are *Gods judgments*, and therefore deserved. We must not charge God foolishly, but acknowledge him to be righteous in all his proceedings. Indeed, while we have to deal with men, *In foro humana Justitia*, we may have something to say: We may charge them with violence and oppression, and plead our innocence: But when we consider, Gods hand is in all that we suffer, that will convince us of sin. His judgments are evident convictions of our sinful provocations. *I know*, O Lord, saith *David*, *that thy judgments are just*, *Psal. 119*. The violence of men doth not impeach the justice of God; nor doth the justice of God warrant, or excuse the violence of men. *Jehu* must answer for all that blood which was shed in *Jezreel*; and yet *Jezreel*, by Divine Sentence, was devoted to destruction, *Hos. 1.4*. *Vos cogitastis malum, sed Deus vertit in bonum*; You thought evil against me, but God meant it to good, said *Joseph* to his unnatural brethren, that sold him into *Egypt*. Their wicked designs were no impeachments to Gods holy purposes. *Quod homo facit improbe, Deus facit juste*. The malice of men can be no prejudice to the justice of God.

We owe this dutiful acknowledgment to God in all our afflictions. *We must accept of the punishment of our iniquity*, *Levit. 26. 41*. Thus the Church of God submits her self to Gods severity; *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*, *Micah 7. 9*. And so again, *Lam. 1*. *The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled against him*.

In all heavy calamities of War and blood-shed, of Dearth and Famine, of sickness and diseases, we may take up the Prophet *Habakkuk's* question *Was the Lord displeased against the Rivers? Was thine anger against the Rivers? Was thy wrath against the Sea?* So may we say; Is the Lord displeased with the course of nature, that he makes it unkindly? Is he angry with the quiet and peaceable order of the World, that he turns it all into up-rore and confusion? No verily, he is the God of order, not of confusion; he is the God of peace, not of dissention; but our sins have bred and brought upon us those judgments. We are like Chimnies, set on fire with our own soot. We minister the fuel that feeds the fire of Gods indignation. That's the first; they are judgments, and therefore deserved.

2. Our

2. Our miseries are *Gods judgments*, and therefore wisely decreed, *Serm. I.* and ordered by God; he sends them upon us, *sine temeritate*; not unadvisedly. Our afflictions, they are not casualties, but the wise and holy dispensation of a righteous God. *In regno providentia, non est locus temeritati.* Chance, or mishaps, have no place, bear no sway in the Kingdom of Providence, and government of God. Our sufferings, they are not *Missilia fortuna*, scatterings of fortune (as the Philistins thought of their Diseases. *It may be, it is but a chance that hath befallen us.*) No, they are right-aiming thunder-bolts, as the Book of *Wisdom* excellently calls them. Our chastisements, they come from the hand of God, that doth wisely order them; they lie not at the feet of Fortune, to be spurn'd into the World at all adventures.

Thus the Scripture tells of *the bending of his Bow, and the preparing of his Arrows*; and he shoots not at rovers (as that man that hit *Ahab* in the Battel, it was unwittingly done, and at all adventure) but he hath a steady aim. He sets up a sinner as his mark, at which he levels and directs his stroke. The most uncertain, and seemingly casual afflictions, are yet wisely and steddily ordered by Divine Providence. Amongst the Plagues of *Egypt*, that of the Swarms of Flies was the most unlikely to be subject to guidance; Who can order, or direct the tumultuary motions of those living Atoms, and erratick Creatures? Yet, what saith God of that Judgment? *Exod. 8. I will send swarms of flies, and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of them; but in Goshen, where my people dwell, no swarms of flies shall be there.* Thus also he calls the Annoyance of Locusts, and Catter-pillars his great Army, of which he is Commander, and see how he orders them, *They shall march every one in his ways, they shall not break their ranks, they shall walk every one in his path*, as a well-ordered Army, *Joel 2.* It makes us acknowledge 'tis neither fate, nor fortune, neither natural destiny, nor uncertain casualty, but the holy hand of God that doth afflict and punish us.

3. They are *Judgments*, and therefore proportioned in a due measure, and moderation; he brings them upon us, *sine furore*. Rage and fury are boundless, doth all in extremity. But Justice and Judgment sets limits to it self; keeps within Compass of a just Moderation. *Dispensator pœnarum est, & non profusor.* *S. Basil* calls them, *κολάσεις πρὸς ἀξίαν τοῖς κακουργοῖς ἀντιμισθίας.*

1. He proportions our sufferings to the measure of our sins. That's *Proportio Justitiæ*. He ponders our punishments with the weight of our sins, *Ut punire videatur justitia, non potestas*, saith *Salvian*; therein rather discharging the office of a Judge, than fulfilling the pleasure of an angry Potentate. Yea, and this he doth with much abatement. He punishes not *ultra*, but *citra*; his Judgments fall short, and on this side of our Iniquities. He punishes us less than our deservings, *Ezra 9.* He serves out his Judgments with the Strike, not with the heaped Measure.

2. He proportions his Judgments with an eye to our infirmities; That's *Proportio Misericordiæ*. He considers not only what we do deserve, but what we can endure. He knows our weakness, and will not over-charge us with unsupportable Judgments. *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth*, saith God in *Isaiah*, *for the spirit would fail before me, and the souls which I have made.* He so remembers us to be sinners, as that he forgets not we are weak Creatures; able to deserve that, which we are not able to endure. *His punishments do not come upon us in their perfection*, as elsewhere he threateneth, *Isai. 47. 9.*

Thus God proportions our Afflictions, as he did the manner of Legal Purifications. That which could endure the fire, was to pass through the fire; but that which could not endure the fire, was to pass through the Water. It was his gracious dealing with his people; How oft did they provoke him in the Wilderness? But yet He destroyed them not, and did not stir up all his wrath; for he remembered they were but flesh; *spiritus vovens, & non radiens*, a wind that passes away, and cometh not again. Hence arises that seeming Contradiction betwixt his peoples confession, and his pity and compassion; *Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities*; nay, saith God, *I have punished you more, You have received at the Lords*

Serm. 1. *hand double for your sins.* He is sorry for their afflictions, and seems to blame his Justice, for being too severe.

We have seen the first Particular, the Nature of our Afflictions, what they are, and what we must account them to be, *They are Gods Judgments;* Consider,

II. Their Time and Season. And that is set forth in this Particle of Time, *Quando, when: When thy Judgments are in the Earth.* And we may consider this Circumstance of Time in a threefold Notion;

1. This *When*, 'tis *Tempus restrictum*; 'Tis a limited and confined Time. This *Quando*, 'tis but *Aliquando*; This Time, 'tis but Sometime. His *Judgments* are not always abroad in the Earth: He is not always smiting, not ever punishing, and afflicting the Sons of Men. *He doth not always chide, saith David, nor keep his anger for ever, Psal. 103.* What we say of the offers of his grace, 'tis most true also of the testimonies of his wrath; they are *hodie*, they are not *quotidiè*; they have a limited time, they are not always upon us. There are other times past over our heads, before this time of Judgment begins;

1. There is the time of his goodness and bounty; and that's like a long Summers-day; a time that God delights in, to do good unto us; to win us to himself by his mercies, that we might *serve him with gladness of heart, and delight our selves in his great goodness.* And,

2. There is the time of his Patience; and that is a long day too, *Max ego sum.* He hath his time of long suffering and patience, when he waits upon the hardness of our hearts, when his Spirit strives with us to reclaim us. We provoke him, and yet he will not be provoked, but forbears us, winks at our faults; when his Eye-lids, rather than his Eyes, look upon us, as *David* speaks, *Psal. 11.* and he will not take that advantage which our sins give against us. These, and many such times are with him, ere he proceeds to punish us.

2. This Particle of Time, *When*, admits of another Notion; 'tis *Tempus pre-stitutum*; He hath a set Time and Season for Execution of Judgment. What *Paul* saith of the Last Judgment, it is true of all other Punishments that do befall us; *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the World, Acts 17.* Thus we see God hath appointed a Birth-day to his Judgments, and when that day comes his Judgments shall appear, *Isai. 42. 14. I have a long time held my peace, I have been still, and refrained my self; now will I cry like a travelling Woman, I will devour and destroy.* According to the time of life, the mother is delivered, and brings forth her Child; So God hath his appointed time, when the Conceptions of his anger shall be brought forth, and shall no longer stay at the place of breaking forth. *Jeremy* calls it, *The day of calamity; Ezekiel, The day of trouble; Amos, the day of darkness.* And though these times are in the certain knowledge and power of God only; yet, as our Saviour speaks, *There are signs of the times*, by which we may conjecture them.

Ripeness of Sin, that is the Season of punishment. *Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe, their wickedness great, Joel 3.*

1. Great in the kind; when outrageous crying sins, Bloud, Oppression, all kind of Excess aboundeth. These hasten Judgments.

2. Great in the spreadth, and generality of sin; when *all flesh hath corrupted their ways*; as they in *Sodom*, from all quarters; *A puero usq; ad senem, All the foundations of the earth are out of course.*

3. Great in the degree; that sin grows impudent and shameless; *They declare their sin as Sodom, they blush not at them, Isai 3.*

4. Great in their obstinacy, that they are impatient of cure. *Lot* must not find fault in *Sodom*. *Amos* must not Prophecie in *Bethel*. The word of God is become a reproach to *Jeremy*, and a derision daily. *When they mocked Gods Messengers, and despised his words, and misused his Prophets, then the wrath of the Lord was against his people, till there be no remedy, 2 Chron. 36.*

3. This

3. This Circumstance of Time admits of another Notion; 'Tis *Tempus* Serm. I. *ultima instantie*; It is then the last Season, and most urgent Opportunity to look about us, to take out this Lesson, which God is teaching us.

Indeed, there were other Times when this should have been done, when our learning and amendment would have been more ingenious;

1. *Tempus admonitionum*; When God had called upon us by his Word, warned us by his Ministers, and Messengers, whom he hath dispatched unto us; *In auditu auris*, as soon as he speaks, we should answer him presently. That had been an acceptable time, and would have proved a time of Salvation. What S. Paul said to the Mariners in their distress, *Acts 27.* may justly be the exprobration of our unteacheableness by such fair warnings; *Sirs, you should have hearkened unto me, and then you had not gained this harm and loss.*

2. *Tempus benignitatum*, The time of mercies and goodness of God, when he invited us to himself by his loving-kindnesses, would have drawn us with the Cords of Love, woo'd us to amendment by his favours; Oh! the bounty of God, that should have prevailed with us, and led us to Repentance.

3. *Tempus castigationum*; The time of more mild and gentle Corrections; when he sends upon us more tolerable tokens of his anger, abates somewhat of our plenty, cuts us short of our abundance, frowns upon us with some smaller appearances of his displeasure, that should make us to look about us, and bestir our selves, and hasten into the ways and paths of righteousness.

These indeed should be the times of our amendment; and it would have been more pleasing and acceptable. But such is our servile and base nature, such is our want of Faith to discern him in these smaller appearances of his displeasure, that nothing will work upon us, but his more heavy Judgments. His Judgments must drive us in, his Mercies will not draw us; that's too gentle Physick, it will not work upon us. Our Prophet complains of it, *Verf. 10. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet he will not learn righteousness.* Nay, threatnings will not do it; *Though thy hand be lifted up, they will not see it,* verse 11, never be moved till we feel it fall on us. Yea, naturally we are prone to set light by Gods more gentle and mild Visitations; *Nubecula cito transibit.* Solomon forewarns us of it, *My Son, despise not the chastisement of the Lord,* lest his milder Chastisements, turn into severer Judgments. This Contempt of smaller Punishments, will beget another Contempt, that will little please us. *Ezekiel* tells us of it; *The Sword shall condemn the Rep,* saith he; gentler Chastisements shall give place to more heavy Destruction. We see it in the Method that God observed with *Pharaoh*, and the *Egyptians*; first, He admonished them by his Messengers; then, He awakened them by his Miracles; then, He scared them by his Threatnings; then, He visited them with more remote Afflictions; then, came home to them with sores and sicknesses; then at last, slew them; And then, they yielded to Him.

What saith the Prophet in the foregoing Verse? *In the way of thy judgments have they waited for thee.* We should have done it in the way of his mercies; but we have lost that opportunity. 'Tis high time we should turn to him in the way of his judgments. It had been our wisdom to have prevented our sufferings. As *Solomon* makes it a point of wisdom, *Prov. 22. 3. The prudent man foresees the evil, and hides himself.* But that's not our Case now. Our *πρόνοια* hath failed us, let us be sure our *Μετάνοια* may relieve us and stand in some stead; See if that may recover us. Ey, when Gods judgments seize upon us, that's the instant and urgent time of repentance; the time of the last patience of God: Either come in now, and make thy peace with God, or thou art devoted to destruction.

There is yet one Particular more; and that is,

III. The Circumstance of Place, where these Judgments are inflicted, τὸ δασκαλεῖον ἢ παιδευτήριον, as Saint *Basil* calls it; the School of Correction; that's the Earth: And this Circumstance doth put upon these Judgments three useful Qualifications to teach and instruct us.

1. These Judgments, they are in the Earth; that is, they are outward, and visible, and external Judgments.

2. These

Serm. I.

2. These Judgments, they are in the earth; they are common, and general, and over-spreading Judgments.
3. They are in the earth, and so they are present and actual Judgments. Three good Advantages to make them profitable to us.

1. They are visible, and external Judgments. And they are the Judgments that are fittest to teach us. Spiritual Judgments have a quite contrary operation upon us; they render us more indocible and incapable of this lesson. Blindness of Mind, Hardness of Heart, Stubbornness and Obstinacy of an inflexible Will; these Plagues and Punishments, they are not teaching, and correcting, but destroying Judgments. *I will send my plagues upon thy heart*, saith God to Pharaoh; that made him past hope, mark'd him out for destruction.

As Gregory distinguishes of sins, so may we of sufferings; *Carnalia peccata sunt majores infamie, sed spiritualia peccata sunt majores culpe*: So, outward bodily Judgments may be more smarting and vexatious; but spiritual Judgments are a great deal more dangerous. Oh! when our sins are made our sufferings, *Quando non patimur id quod acriter dolet, sed facimus id quod turpiter delectat*; that saith S. Aug. is *Ira Dei gravissima*. 'Tis a fearful token of Gods heavy displeasure, when David's curse falls upon us, and we fall from one wickedness to another; when (as S. Aug. speaks, lib. 1. cap. 24. *contra adversar. Legis & Prophet.*) *Crimina criminibus vindicantur, & supplicia peccantium sunt incrementa vitiorum*; there is small hope then to enter into his righteousness. Oh! take heed of being Agents in the Judgments of God. Sufferers may be pittied, but when we come to be Self-destroyers by wilfulness in sin, that puts us into an hopeless condition: when we sport our selves with our miseries, like the Citizens of *Cesarea in Africk*; of whom S. August. reports, that upon a set time every year, they divided themselves in two Companies, Fathers on one side, and their Children on the other, and took up stones, and with them maimed, and mischieved, and killed each other.

2. His Judgments are in the earth; They are common, and general, and over-spreading Judgments; and they are most likely to work good upon us. God hath not only his Personal, but his National, and Epidemical Judgments. Sometimes he takes a Sinner with a private Judgment, as with an Angle; otherwhile he hath *Angelus eorum* his *Verriculum*, and Drag-net that catches all kind of Sinners. He hath his Arrows in private Visitations, and he hath his Chain-shot that will bear down all before them. All these are stored up in his Treasures. For, as S. Aug. observes well; *Non sicut Regi hominum, aut Principi, sic Deo; quicquid à multis peccatur, inultum est*. A multitude of offenders among men, even forces an impunity. And, as elsewhere he saith, *Neq; Rex neq; Multitudo*,—Excommunication must not reach to Kings, nor to whole Congregations. 'Tis so with Men; but God knows how to punish Multitudes of Sinners, be they never so many. Though we have our ten thousands, he hath his twenty thousands to come against us, as our Saviour speaks. He hath his Sickle in his hand to reap down whole Countries, *Joel 3*. He hath his Razor, not only his *Vosselle* to pluck out some disordered hair, but to shave and make bare all the body, *Ezek. 5. 1*. He can command his Sword to go through the Land, *Ezek. 14*.

3. His Judgments are in the Earth; and so they are present, and actual Judgments. Conceive them in a threefold nearness and propinquity:

1. When these Judgments are *aliorum pena*. When we see Gods Judgments lie heavy upon others, then we should take warning, and ere they come nearer to us, we should learn Righteousness. 'Tis the wisdom which Christ teaches us; *when our Enemy is afar off, we should send and sue for conditions of peace*. That's the first, and best way of amendment by Gods Judgments; when the visible Judgments of God upon others make us to bethink our selves, and return to him. Murdering pieces to others, should be Warning pieces to us. The Jews have a saying, that if War be in another Country, yet they should fast and mourn, because the evil of War is begun, though amongst other people. We should consider, the Judge is now in his Circuit, God hath entered upon his Visitation, he

hath

begun with others, it should make us look about us, lest he ends with us. This *Serm. I.*
 is *Sapere aliorum exemplo*; to learn our lesson by other mens sufferings.

Well, we have over-slit that time, we are nothing bettered by Gods heavy hand upon other Nations; the sufferings of *Samaria* have wrought no good upon *Jerusalem*; There is yet.

2. A nearer propinquity, when these Judgments of God are *Nobis impendentia*. *Ecce Judex antefores adstat*; The Judge stands before the door; that comes closer to us, and doth more nearly concern us. When a dismal Cloud of vengeance hovers over our heads, when we find our selves beset with his judgments, when the tokens of Gods displeasure begin to appear upon us, discontents, divisions, great thoughts of heart, rumours shall be upon rumours, as the Prophet speaks; when God hath unheathed his Sword, and is whetting of it, and we see the Angel, as *David* did over *Jerusalem*, ready to smite us, then 'tis high time to look about us; *Quando nondem affligente, sed adhuc imminente & minante adversario, pacem querimus*, that is *Sapere nostro periculo*. To learn Righteousness, upon fear of Judgments, it is servile; but yet it may be accepted, may prevent actual punishments. Had we feared them, we should not have felt them.

Well, we have lost that advantage too; There is yet.

3. Another propinquity, and that is worst of all; That is, When his judgments are *Nobis incumbentia*. They are already upon us; his wrath is already kindled, and smoaks out against us. We do not only fear the Rod, but feel it; then, if ever, it concerns us to quicken our conversion. When he hath bathed his Sword in our blood, and it hath eaten flesh, and his Arrows stick fast in our sides; this is *Sapere proprio damno*. What? Know you not that *Egypt* is destroyed? O! 'tis high time to awaken, when Gods judgments have broken in upon us, and begun to consume us.

We have seen the first particular of the Text; *Doctorem*, that which must teach us, *His Judgements*; Now, let us consider the
 Second; that is *Disciplina*, the Lesson we must learn by them; *We must learn Righteousness*.

And here we have three things observable;

1. Who are the Scholars; They are the *Inhabitants of the World*.

2. What is their Duty; they must be *Learners*.

3. What is their Lesson; they must learn *Righteousness*.

1. *The Inhabitants of the World*; they are the Scholars that must be taught and instructed by these judgments. The Prophet's speech, we see, is of a large circumference. It takes in all, It aims not at any one rank, or order of men, to reform them and all will be well; No, the amendment must be answerable to the judgment. If that be general, and over-spreading the Earth, the reformation must be as general. The Plaster must be as broad as the soar. If it be an overflowing scourge, that goes through the Land, sure the amendment must not be confined to a narrow compass.

There is a necessary connexion in these two combinations.

1. National sins, bring National judgments; that's the first; and then.

2. National Judgments call for National Repentance.

In *Joel* 2. we read of two Trumpets sounding;

1. One in the first Verse, there we have it; *Blow the Trumpet in Sion, Sound an alarm, let all the inhabitants of the Land tremble at it*; then,

2. At *Vers. 15*. There is another Trumpet sounding; *Blow the Trumpet in Sion, proclaim a Fast*; call all to repentance.

This Trumpet must sound as loud, give as shrill a noise, as did the other Trumpet; all the inhabitants of the Land must be called to repentance. And the Use of this second Trumpet belongs to us of the *Clergie*. We are to lift up our voices, like Trumpets, to call to repentance. As for that other Trumpet, to foretell a judgment, especially to blow a Trumpet to stir up and bring on a judgment, let them look well to their warrant that will sound such a Trumpet

Let

Serm. I. Let the Sons of Aaron observe that rule which God gives to them for this use of the Trumpet, Numb. 10. 7. *when the Congregation is to be gathered together, you shall blow, but you shall not sound an Alarm.*

Sure, in all the Scripture, we find not any Prophet of God, by any sound of theirs, quickning or hastning of a judgment. And when they did but foretell it, they did it with much regret and commiseration: *My bowels, my bowels, saith the Prophet Jeremiah, I am pained at my very heart, because thou hast heard, O my son, the sound of the Trumpet, the alarm of War, Jer. 4. 19.* But for the Trumpet that calls to repentance, let that, like the Trumpets on Mount Sinai, sound louder, and louder. You are the Lords Remembrancers, *keep not ye silence.* 'Tis our office, *to teach every man, and to warn every man,* by the sound of this Trumpet. They say, there is a tenure of Land in the Northern borders, which they call the tenure of *Cornage*; they hold their land by sounding of a Trumpet upon the approach of an Enemy. That is our tenure for what we possess. *Our sound must go into all the Earth, and our words unto the end of the Land*; all the Inhabitants of the Land must be called to repentance. Indeed, sometimes God punishes a few, that all may amend, and his mercy delights in such compendious cures; but he never punishes all, that a few only may mend; but expects, and exacts a general reformation. To hope that the repentance of a few private men should prevail for the ceasing of a general judgment, is as if we should think to quench a raging fire by the drops, and sprinklings of a Casting-Bottle. No, when *all flesh have corrupted their ways* 'tis not *Noah, Daniel, or Job,* that can prevail with God; nothing can appease him but a general repentance.

Thus you see, Who are the Scholars, *All the Inhabitants of the Land.*

2. What is their duty? They are required to *learn*; And learning on our part, supposes teaching on God's. His judgments then, they have this virtue in them, they are purposed by God to be our instructions. He delights indeed to win us to himself by a more gentle way, by favours and mercies; but, if that will not do it, (as it does but seldom); we listen to God, saith S. *Aug. Rariùs inter prospera, crebriùs inter adversa*; I spake unto thee in thy prosperity, saith God, but thou saidst, *I will not hear, Jer. 22. 21.* but then he open our ears by his corrections, *Job 36.* he delivers us over to afflictions, *Καθ' ὅσον παιδαγωγῶς καὶ διδασκάλου,* (as S. *Basil* speaks) as to so many curst Schoolmasters, that we may learn obedience by the things which we suffer, as the Apostle speaks, *Ἡ κόλασις ὅτι διόρθωσις καὶ ἡ τιμωρία παιδαγωγία, καὶ ἡ ἐν ᾗ διδασκαλία*; his displeasure must be our instructor; as it is said of Gedeon; he took briers, and thorns, and with them he taught the men of Succoth; *Judg. 8. 16. Res prospera donum est consolantis; res adversa, donum est admonentis Dei,* saith S. *Aug.* Doth he grant us prosperity? then he doth encourage us; Doth he send us adversity? then he doth admonish us, *Ut, qui beneficiis non intelligatur, plagis intelligatur,* saith *Cyprian,* that we may learn to know him by his punishments, whom we would not acknowledge in his mercies. His judgments, they are speaking judgments; as God saith to *Moses, Exod. 4. If they will not hearken to the voice of the first Sign,* Gods judgments are *Judicia vocalia,* and clamantia too; not dumb and silent, but loud speaking judgments.

And that calls for our Attention; *Audiam quid loquatur Dominus*; If he speak it becomes us to listen; If he teaches, it is fit we should learn. *He that planted the ear, shall not be heard?* saith *David*; The consequence is as good and strong; *He that planted the ear, shall not be heard?* he that chastiseth the Heathen, shall not he correct Us? That is the duty of the Text; *We must all learn Righteousness.* Surely, if Gods Rod be upon us, we may conclude, there is some things, either not known, or mistaken, or forgotten, or neglected in point of Duty. Indeed, as S. *Aug.* saith, 'Tis a shame for some men to begin to learn, but it is a greater shame to continue ignorant. We should be *multiadmodum* learn betimes; but if we have let slip that opportunity, we must be *multiadmodum* late learners, rather than not at all; especially, when he writes our Lessons upon our backs in blood. What saith S. *Paul* to such *What, have you suffered so many things in vain? If it be yet in vain,* Gal. 3. 4. And

And Learners we must be, and that looks at our own duty, what concerns our Serm. I.
 selves to know and do; not become teachers of other mens duties. And yet, to invert the words of the Apostle; *whereas for this time, we should be all learners now*; how few of us are learners? how many of us will teach, and find fault with others? *Aliena satagimus, & nostra negligimus*, as *Chrysostom* speaks; Complain of disorders, call for reformation, censure and condemn the lives of other men, and they, it may be, more innocent than our selves; Ey, but no man saith, *What have I done*, saith *Jeremiah* of the people of his time; and it is too true of us. So far we are from *Jonahs* Confessions, *Propter me tempestas hæc*. My sins have had an hand in raising this tempest, that we come not to the Disciples suspicion of themselves, *Master, is it I?* Every man will be an officer to attach others, none acknowledges himself a malefactor, and condemns himself. *curiosum genus ad cognoscendam vitam alienam, desidiosum ad corrigendam suam*; exceeding curious to find fault with others, extreme careless to reform themselves. *Ἄλλων ἰατρὸς, αὐτοὺς ἔλκεον ἑαύτων*, very diligent to search other mens sores, but neglect our own, and let them rankle and putrifie.

Learn then we must; and that, may be, we will be content to do. 'Tis but the business of the brain. Hearing, and conceiving, and remembring, there is no great pains in that; nay, may be, much delight and pleasure in learning and knowing. *τὸ μαθάνειν ἡδὺ*, saith *Aristotle*; there is much pleasure in learning and increase of knowledge. Man, naturally is *ζῷον ἐπιστημονικόν, καὶ διηρημονικόν*; an understanding knowing Creature. Ey, but that is not all the duty to be learned in the Text. 'Tis a practical duty, and practical things are best learned by practice. We may know them in notion, and apprehension, and still be accounted ignorant men, if we do not practise them; *Ἀμαθύνομεν ποιεῖν, ποιεῖντες μαθάνομεν*, saith the Philosopher, Those things which we learn to do, by doing we learn them. You may teach a man all the rules and method of Musick, but he is no Musician till he can handle his Instrument. *Ambulando discimus ambulare*; we teach Children to go, not by rules and precepts, but by making them go, *S. John* bids us take heed we mistake not in this point; *Little Children, let no man deceive you, he that doth righteousness, is righteous*, 1 *John* 3.7. A good understanding have they that do thereafter, *Psal.* 3. Such learning is to some purpose. And this brings in,

3. The last Particular, the Lesson to be learn'd; that is *Righteousness*. And take the sum of this duty in these three particulars;

1. It is *Præmarium officium*. *Righteousness* is that which God chiefly aims at in all our afflictions; *To make us a righteous people, zealous of good works*. Indeed, there are other substantial duties, which he requires of us, and expects at our hands, in the day of our visitation. Prayers, and Fasting, and Mourning, and the acts of Humiliation; they are pious, and profitable, and seasonable duties when Gods Hand is heavy upon us. *Humble your selves under the mighty hand of God*, saith Saint James, *Return to me with fasting, and with weeping, and with mournings*, saith the Lord, *Josel* 2. *In that day did the Lord call to weeping, and to mourning, and to girding with Sackcloth*, *Isai.* 22. 12. And the neglect of those duties, were an high provocation; *Perf.* 14. But yet, the doing of these, is not the thing that God chiefly aims at; as if all were well when these services were performed. These are not Justice, but *conditura Justitiarum*, as *Origen* speaks; they are but instrumental, and preparative duties to fit and dispose us to the great duty of *Righteousness*;

1. They are *Realia infœvia*, real confessions of our sinful unworthiness.
2. They are *Incitamenta penitentiæ*, good provocations to Conversion and Amendment.
3. They are *Testimonia interni doloris*, visible testimonies of our inward Contrition.

But yet they come short of the works of *Righteousness*. They may serve for Physick, but not for Diet, and the regiment of health. We do not say, a man is recoverd, because his Physick works kindly. The life, and strength of Piety, consists in *Righteousness*. 'Tis not *ἀποχὴ βρωμάτων, ἀλλ' ἀμαρτιῶν*, saith *Chrysostom*,

Serm. I. not abstinence from meat, but from sin, that makes a good fast. The *Ninevites* they fasted, and wore Sack-cloth, and sat in Ashes, and it was well-pleasing to God; but yet it was their *Righteousness*, and the amendment of their lives that prevailed for deliverance. 'Tis not said, That God saw their Fastings; but, *God saw their Works that they turned from their evil way*, and he repented, and spared them. 'Tis *Righteousness*, saith *Solomon*, that delivers from death.

2. It is, *Substantiale officium*. The Lesson to be learned by Gods judgments, is *Righteousness*; and that's a Substantial duty. Our Saviour calls them, βαρύτερα τῶ νόμῳ, the *weighty things of the Law*. It consists in the performance of real, and substantial, and moral Obedience. The neglect of those duties, God re-vengeth; and the practice of these, he calls us unto by his severe judgments.

It is not the altering of some outwards, and rituals to purchase some external forms, that God will be appeased with; or that which he aims at in his heavy judgments: and yet this is the construction that we make of all his judgments; As if we should pull down an House, to remove a few Cob-webs, that are in the roof of it; or pluck out the Eye, that we may free it from a mote; or (as *Gerson* wittily) as if to kill a Fly, that is on a mans forehead, we should take an Hammer, and beat out his brains. No, What saith God, when he reckons with his people? *Psal. 50. I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices, and Burnt-offerings.* 'Tis not the failing in these Ceremonious Services that doth so much provoke him. The Kingdom of God consists not in these, but in *Righteousness and Holiness*. We must not, *cum capiti mederi debeamus, redwivian curare*, think to cure a vital part, by waling away a mote, or freckle, that appears in our face. *Relieve the oppressed*, saith God, *judge the cause of the poor, break every heavy yoke, let Righteousness run down like a mighty stream*; that is able to quench the flames of Gods anger, and just indignation.

3. The Lesson to be learn'd, is *Righteousness*, and that is *Universale officium*; 'tis a comprehensive duty, of a large circumference.

1. It takes in all Estates, and orders of men. Some virtues are appropriate to some sorts of men, they suit not with others. Good Government, that is the Magistrates virtue; Obedience, that is the duty of the people: and so in many others. But *Righteousness*, it is of universal concernment. It speaks, like *John Baptist*, to People, to Publicans, to Souldiers; teacheth every one of them what they must do. Warns us as *S. John* doth, *I write unto you Children, I write unto you Young men, I write unto you Old men*: It gives every man his charge. And then.

2. It takes in all sorts of duties; 'tis *συναισθησις*, every virtue: As health is the *εὐκρασία*, the good temper of all the humours of the body, so is *Righteousness* the just proportion, and exercise of every virtue. And Gods judgments aim at both these: First, all the Inhabitants of the Land; every rank and order of men must take out this Lesson. Not say, Reform the Clergy, and all will be right; punish exorbitancies in them, no matter for the rest. What saith the Lord to the Israelites that were so hot in pursuing their brethren, *2 Chron. 28. 10. And now ye purpose to keep under the Children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen, and bondwomen unto you; but are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?* It was a word in season, and gave a check and stop to their rage and fury. Oh! that it might do the like with us. And then every sort of men must resolve of every sort of duty that belongs unto them. Gods judgments have an universal aim; he hunts us not out of one ill course, to drive us into another; hate Idolatry, but commit Sacrilege; flee from Superstition, and run into Prophaneness; cry out of Oppression, and bring in Confusion; suppress Popery, and suffer Schism and Faction to increase and multiply; as if Locusts had been the only judgment, and that swarms of Flies and Lice had brought no annoyance upon the Land of Egypt.

No; Let us resolve of an universal Reformation, and then we may expect an universal Deliverance. Then our God will *Return, and Repent, and leave a Blessing behind him.* Let us first learn the Didactical part of *Esay's Song*; and then we shall have cause to take up the Eucharistical part. *He will put a new Song into our mouths, even Thanksgiving unto our God.* The righteous Nation shall have perfect peace, as our Prophet here promises. The Apostles words will admit of this inversion; we shall find it true, *The fruit of Peace, 'tis sown in Righteousness.* Indeed, in this holy Husbandry, *Et tellus & annus fructificat*; Righteousness and Peace, they help each other. *Righteousness*, that is the soil out of which Peace springeth; and Peace, that is the season, in which *Righteousness* flourisheth. *Sow to your selves in Righteousness, and reap in mercy,* Hosea 10. 12. *The work of Righteousness shall be Peace; and the effect of Righteousness shall be Quietness, and Assurance for ever,* Isa. 32. 17. As *S. Augustine* sweetly meditates on those words of the Psalmist, *Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other; Fac Justitiam* (saith he) *& habebis Pacem; duæ amicae sunt, tu unam vis, & alteram non facis; nemo est, qui non vult Pacem, sed non omnes volunt operari Justitiam.* Every man wishes for Peace, but every man is not for *Righteousness*. No, saith the Father, *Si amicum Pacis non amaveris, non amabit te Pax.* Either love *Righteousness*, the companion of Peace, or Peace it self will never love thee, or delight to dwell with thee.

Now the God of Peace, that delights in the Peace and Prosperity of his servants, lead us into all the ways of **RIGHTEOUSNESS**, and guide our feet into the paths of Peace; And that for His sake, who is the Lord our Righteousness, and the Prince of Peace, even **JESUS CHRIST** our Peacemaker;

To whom, &c.

A S E R M O N O N

Habbakkuk 3. 17, 18.

Although the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the Vines; the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields should yield no meat, The flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall; Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in the God of my salvation.



HE Text, it is a Prophetical Intimation of a Judgment of Dearth, and Famine, that should fall upon the Land. In it, the Lord threatens to break the *staff of bread*, to send *cleanness of teeth*, and *scarcity of all things*; a general want of all the supports of life.

And this passage of Scripture, together with the Context, sets down the entertainment that the Prophet, and People of God gave to all this sad Prediction. Here is a double Entertainment.

1. They entertain it with fear; *Verse 16. When I heard this, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself.*

2. They entertain it with faith, and confidence; yea, with joy, and comfort; *Although this affliction shall befall us; Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

See a sweet combination, and mixture of two contrary dispositions in the heart of this holy Prophet.

1. A disposition of fear, and sorrow.

2. A disposition of joy, and comfort.

1. When he foresees this great calamity, he fears and trembles at it.

1. Take it either as a natural affection, hearing of so great a misery to come upon them; though he be a Saint, yet he is afraid, and troubled at it. The holiest men, while they are in the body, they are not so fortified with grace, but that they shrink, and startle, and tremble at miseries, like other men. *Abraham in Egypt is afraid of his life: Good Jacob, when Esau comes toward him, is afraid to meet him. David, pursued by Saul, cries out in fear, I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul. Elijah was subject to the like Passion; he fled for his life. Want, and poverty, and pain, and misery, are fearful conditions even to the Saints of God.* Or,

2. Conceive this fear, as an holy, and religious disposition in them. When God threatens to bring a judgment upon us, the first apprehensions we must have of his menaces, must be apprehensions of fear and sorrow, and humiliation, motions tending to Repentance. *My flesh trembles for fear of thee, saith David, Psal. 119. 120. And I am afraid of thy judgments.* It is not fortitude, but fool-hardiness to stout it out with God, and not to startle at the signs and tokens of his displeasure. How was God delighted with this awful disposition in good *Josiah*, when he wept and his heart melted at the hearing of those Judgments; which God threatned against them? Nay, it prevailed somewhat with God, when it was sad and serious, though not sound and sanctified, in wicked *Abab*.

2. When

2. When this grace, hath had a perfect work in us; then faith, and hope, *Serm. I.*
and confidence, will be seasonable graces. *I trembled in my self, that I might rest in*
the day of trouble, v. 16. Then fear shall give place to joy and comfort. This
holy fear, will bring in Faith. And this Faith will cast out fear. As mercy, on
Gods part, rejoiceth against judgment; so Faith, on our part shall triumph over
fear. *In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, thy comforts have refresh-*
ed my soul, Psal. 94. 20. In the midst of all these sad occurrents, yet will I rejoice
in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

These are the two blessed Entertainments of any threatned Judgment;

1. A deep Humiliation.

2. A stedfast Faith, and Consolation.

For the words themselves, we may resolve them into these two particulars;

1. Is a sad Supposition: *Although the Fig-tree shall not blossom, the strength, and*
comfort of all the Creatures fail us; and we suffer a want and destitution of all
things; That's the Supposition. Here is,

2. A comfortable Resolution; *Although these miseries befall us, yet in the*
midst of them all, the Prophet knows how to support himself, *Yet will I rejoice in*
the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

First, For the Supposition. And the Sum and Substance of it will appear unto
us in these three Extractions, which we will draw out of the Text.

I. The Strength and Comfort of the Creatures, may fail us; there is in them a
fading, and vanishing Condition; *The fig-tree may not blossom, the Vine may be fruitless,*
the fields may yield no meat: we may be destitute of all these succours, and supports
of life.

All these helps, and supplies for life, have a possibility in them of failing of
us. Reckon not upon them as certain and unchangable comforts, that will not
disappoint us. As it was in the Manna, which they fed on in the Wilderness; 'tis
so in all the helps and means of this life, there is a Worm of Corruption that will
breed in them.

This uncertainty, and failing in the Creature, will appear to us in these three
Particulars.

1. In their production and breeding, there is a great deal of uncertainty. *In*
the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening with-hold not thine hand; for thou know-
est not whether shall prosper, either this, or that, saith Solomon, Ecclesiast. 11. 6. He
who sowes, sowes in hope; upon adventure, God gives it a body at his pleasure.
The dew of Heaven, the influences of the Stars, the lust and strength of the Soil,
all uncertainties to mans Providence. *Ye have sown much, and bring in little, saith*
God in Haggai, Chap. 1. 6. Ye looked for twenty measure and there were but ten; for fifty
vessels, and there were but twenty, Chap. 2. 16. A great uncertainty in their Production.

2. There is a great deal of uncertainty and insufficiency in their use, there
may be a failing in that. It is possible we may receive the fruits of the earth in
plenty, and a bundance, and yet come short of the comforts of them. The Prophet
tells us of Bread, and of a Staff of bread. This Staff of Bread may be broken, and
then that supply of life is weak and impotent. *Levit. 26. 26. When I have broken the*
Staff of your Bread— then ye shall eat, and not be satisfied. There is *ἄpros*, and
πρὸ τρυφῆς *πρὸ ἀρετῆς*; Bread and the Foison, and nourishing strength in Bread. We
may have the first, and yet miss of the second; and so, that creature will prove
empty, and insufficient to us.

And the reason is, because the vigour and nourishing power of the creatures,
are not originally in them, but by a voluntary derivation from God into them.
He is the Authour, and Fountain of Life. *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and they are*
quicken'd, Psal. 104. 30. It is in him, *that we live, and move, and have our being.* This
strength, and helpfulness in the creature, it is but as a beam from the Sun; inter-
cept the Sun, and the beam vanisheth. It is as a branch from the Root; divide
it from the Root, and the branch withereth. It is but as a stream from the Foun-
tain; seal up the Fountain, and the stream dries up. Our Saviour tells us, *Matth. 4. 4.*

Man

Serm. 1. *Man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* He must speak that word, or our bread will not nourish us. There is a threefold Word on which it doth depend :

1. A *Verbo ordinante*. He hath given an original Law and Command to the creatures, that they may nourish us.
2. A *Verbo sustentante*. These weak creatures must, in their use, be supported by the word of his Power, or they cannot comfort us. If he withdraws away his face, they perish, *Psal.* 104. 29.
3. A *Verbo benedicente*. That virtue that is in them will lye dead, unable to put forth it self, except his Blessing gives it an actual working, to refresh and cherish us. 'Tis he, who fills our hearts with food and gladness, *Act.* 14. 17.

Without which influence from God, how poor and insufficient are all helps of nature? As the Prophet *Haggai* expresses it, *Chap.* 1. 6. *Ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye cloath you, but there is none warm.* Of themselves, they are poor, beggarly Elements, empty husks, their goodness is not inclosed in them. The comfort they convey unto us, 'tis from an higher Fountain. That's the second, they may fail in their use.

3. The very being, and substance of these natural helps, carry with it this condition, That they are vanishing, and fading.

1. As creatures, so there is a seed of decay, and fading in them. The most excellent, and permanent creature of it self tends to nothing, if not supported with the word of Gods Power. *Heb.* 1. 6. There is a *Pondus nature*, and there must be *Mantenentia Divina*, that must sustain it. As St. *Augustine* speaks of man, He is *Terra filius*, *Nibili nepos*; the Earth was his Mother, Nothing was his Grandfather. As all creatures came out of Nothing, so thither would they sink again, and return to nothing.

2. As sublunary creatures, so by their natural composition, they are subject to fading and corruption. All things under the Moon, are fading and transitory. The heavens have a frame of perpetuity; but these creatures, that are the means of our lives, they are full of variety, uncertainty, contrariety; all grounds of corruption.

3. Consider the creatures as living under Gods curse for the sin of man, and so they are subject to a greater weakness and vanity. Gods displeasure doth blast them, suck out the strength, and vigour of them; and it brings upon them, not only *Adam's* punishment, not to yield us fruit without our labour; but, oftentimes, *Cain's* curse, they are barren, fruitless, though we do labour. As his Blessings can put a strange virtue and vivacity into them; *Daniel's* Pulse was more nourishing than the King's Dainties; It made a little Meal in the Barrel, and Oyl in the Cruse, to yield plenty; So, on the contrary, his Indignation consumes the strength and vigour of nature. *Master, the Tree that thou cursedst, is presently withered.* See this in the Israelites, they must needs have Quails, and Dainties, the most nourishing food; he sent it them to the full; but what saith *David*? *He sent leanness withal into their soul,* *Psal.* 106. 15. It never thrives with them. *He sent among his fat ones, leanness,* *Isa.* 10. 16.

This vanishing weakness of the creature, should make us think what to reckon of our lives. Such as the fewel is, such must needs be the fire. Straw and Stubble yield but a sudden blaze, and soon out again. And if these succours, and supports of life be thus vanishing, and fading; sure then Life it self is but a transitory thing, no matter of confidence. Weak materials make no strong buildings, and vanishing meats breed but a vanishing life. Our Saviour calls them but *perishing meats*: *Labour not for the meat that perisheth,* *John* 6. 27. And St. *Paul* sets out this condition, both of meat and life, *1 Cor.* 6. 13. *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it, and them. Whosoever drinketh of this Water, shall thirst again,* *John* 4. 13. These outward helps may, for a time, refresh; but, not always preserve and support our lives. All these outward things, they are but *Consolatiuncule temporales*, as St. *Augustine* calls them, petty, transient comforts, like the refreshings

refreshings of *Jonah's* gourd, but the shade of a few leaves, and there is a Worm *Serm. I.*
at the Root of it, that will consume it presently.

So much of the first Extraction ; The creatures are weak, and may fail us.

II. A second Extraction from the Text, is, When Scarcity and Want comes as a judgment from God, and from his wrath and heavy displeasure, then it is extreme, and extraordinary, and beyond the course of nature. The creatures have naturally some weakness in them, they are subject to fade and decay ; but when his anger blasts them, then Want and Scarcity proves far more heavy, and unsupportable. It is like a sharp Arrow, shot by the hand of a mighty Giant ; and drawn up to the head, it falls with a double force, and pierces deadly. See the greatness, and sadness of this judgment now threatned, in these aggravations of it :

1. Gods anger will cause a dearth and famine in a most plentiful and fruitful Land. The land of *Canaan* was the fruitfulest of all lands ; as the Garden of God ; a land *flowing with milk and honey*, a land of vineyards, the best of all Lands, as *Moses* describes it, *Deut. 8*. It was *Terra fructus centesimi* ; it brought forth to *Isaac*, no less than an hundred-fold, *Gen. 26*. The Fruit of it was so wonderful, that they cut down but one bunch of Grapes at *Eschol*, and the people, who had seen the plenty of Egypt, admired it. It was so rich a land, that it was the granary of other neighbouring Countries. It had not only plenty for it self, but bounty for others. *Solomon* gave twenty thousand measure of *Wheat*, for food ; and twenty measures of pure Oyl, to *Hiram*, King of Tyre. *1 Kings 5. 11*. And the Country of Tyre was nourished by this Country. *Acts 12. 10*. Yet, when God is displeased, *Psal. 107. 34*. A fruitful land maketh be barren. He turns Paradise into a wilderness. He brings Want, in monte filii Olei, Scarcity in a most fruitful Land. That's the first Aggravation.

2. Gods anger will cause a Dearth in those Fruits, that are naturally most yielding and pleasant. The Fig-tree, of all Trees, is most fruitful, bringing forth of it's own accord, with the least care, and culture, fructifying in the most barren, and stony places ; bearing twice a year ; soonest ripening ; almost never failing. So the vine, that's a fruitful Plant ; 'tis made the Emblem of Plenty, and Fruitfulness. That's a print of Gods judgment, when the most hopeful, and plentiful of all the creatures, fail us, and do not their kind to us.

3. A Third print of Gods anger in this Scarcity threatned, is, That it is a national, general, over spreading Famine. Usually, if one part of the land suffers Scarcity, other parts abound with Plenty. But when God calls for a Famine, sends a judgment in this kind, he turns the whole land into a Desert. *Bashan* languisheth, and *Carmel*, and the flower of *Lebanon* languisheth, *Nahum 1. 4*. These were the richest soil of all the Country, yet these were parch'd up, and fruitless, by his displeasure. When he sends a Judgment, he will bid it go through the land, *Ezek. 14*. He will make the whole Land to mourn, bring an overflowing scourge upon it.

4. A fourth print of Gods anger is, He makes it an universal scarcity upon all kinds of food, and supports of life. Here is the Staff of Bread broken, and the herds and flocks fail, and the refreshing of the Wine-press ; the Seed, and the Vine, and the Fig-tree, and the Olive-tree, all become fruitless. Such a desolation is more than ordinary. Usually, when one commodity fails, another abounds ; if Corn be dear, Cattle will be cheap. That weather oft-times, that hinders one kind, helps another. But here, when God comes with a Judgment, he blasts all the helps of Nature. Then the Corn, and the Wine, and the Oyl, they all fail by the blastings of his displeasure. Thus God compares his Judgment to a fire that burns all before it ; The Land is as the Garden of Eden before it ; and behind it, a desolate Wilderness, *Joel 2. 3*. This the Lord points at as a wonder, *Joel 1. 2*. Hear this, ye old men, ye who can talk of dear years, hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers ? — That which the Palmer-worm hath left, hath the Locust eaten ; and that which the Locust hath left, hath the Caterpillar eaten. O, Gods Judgments make a full end. He makes the decays of Nature excessive, and violent. As it is said of the Grass-hoppers of Egypt, there were never such since ; exceeding grievous.

Now,

Serm. I.

Now, Gods displeasure oft-times breaks out in this kind of Judgment; he chuses this kind of scourge of scarcity and famine to punish a people with; for divers reasons.

1. It is a most Just Judgment, thus to cut us short, to diminish our portion, to call for a dearth, and poverty upon the land, to withdraw from us the succour and supply of the creatures. For sin forfeits all our interest and right we have in the comforts of the creatures. We are not soveragin and supreme owners of them, but we hold them of God; our title to them is from him, and that upon condition of our duty, and homage, and obedience to him. Thus we see God claims, and challenges them all, as his own, *'Tis my oyl, and my meat, my flour, and my honey*, Ezek. 16. 18, 19. Now, wicked men, they incur not only some smaller penalties, but it is just with God to seize all the creatures into his own hands, and to forbid them to yield their fruit unto us. Thus he punished the first sin, *Cursed be the earth for thy sake, thorns, and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee*, Gen. 3. Thus he revenged Cains wickedness, *When thou tillest the ground, it shall not yield to thee her strength*. So also he threatened the Jews for prophating his Sabbaths, *That the land should lie waste, and keep her Sabbaths; there should be neither sowing, nor reaping*, Lev. 26. 34. God tells us the Land is his, we are but sojourners with him. Or, as *Parisiensis* tells, God doth as some Landlords, lets out the World to halves. There arises a double fruit.

1. Glory, that he reserves to himself.

2. Comfort, that is our half.

Pay him his glory, or else 'tis just with him to deny us our comfort. Acknowledge thy great Land-lord, do him suit and service, or the creatures are forfeited, and all thy comforts by them.

2. This scourge of Scarcity, 'tis an equal, and suitable, and proper punishment. Our sins are usually, the sins of abusing the plenty of a good Land, to luxury and excess; and it is the usual rule of Gods proceedings, *In quo quis peccat, in eo plectitur*. The matter of our sinning, commonly becomes the matter of our suffering. Thus God fits the punishment of *Jerusalem*, suitable to their sins, *Thou hast taken my meat, and my flower, and mine oyl, and offered them to Idols; therefore I will diminish thine ordinary food*, Ezek. 16. 19. So, when God threatens a scarcity of wine, *Joel* 1. 5. Whom doth he call upon to take notice of this Judgment? *Awake ye drunkards, and weep, and howl all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine, for it is cut off from your months; howl ye drunkards; and so, howl ye worldlings when scarcity seizes upon you; you have sinned in the abuse of these creatures; your excess hath brought this judgment upon you. God usually meets with men in their own ways. Covetousness, and earthly-mindedness, luxury, and excess all of them are abuses of these good gifts of God; To punish us in the loss of these is a proper punishment.*

3. This calamity of dearth, and scarcity, the failing of the creatures, that the earth doth not give her increase, 'tis a proportionable judgment. The creatures are made to be our servants, we are made to be Gods servants. As long as we do perform our service to him, the creatures shall yield their strength, and increase, and prove serviceable to us. But, if we fail God, how just is it then that the creatures should fail us? As *St. Aug.* sweetly observes, our Reason would not obey God, therefore our Sense shall not obey Reason. As *Hushy* said to *Abisalom*, *Whom all Israel makes King, and serves him will I serve*; excusing his seeming revolt from *David*; so, when the creatures start aside, and revolt from us, prove unserviceable to us, 'tis their real profession. They must serve their grand Lord; if we revolt from him, they revolt from us. The Father's words are these, *Lib. 13. de Civit. YI 3. Qui superiorem Dominum deseruerunt, inferiorem sumunt ad suum arbitrium non tenebant*; And, *de Nupt. & Conjug. Lib. 1. Cap. 16. Injustum erat, ut ei obtemperetur, a servo suo, qui non obedierat domino suo*.

4. God oft-times, singles out dearth and famine, to punish a Nation with; it is a deep, and evident, and apparent judgment. War, and oppression, and captivity,

captivity, many other calamities, mans hand is seen in them, they are agents and instruments in bringing them upon us. And in such calamities, we can be content not to see Gods hand in them, but to charge our sufferings upon the malice of men; as if God and we were in good terms. God oft-times loses the glory of such afflictions. As indeed the heart of man is exceeding desirous, in all afflictions, if it be possible, to prove that God is not the authour, but some other cause. As *Pharaoh* laboured a long time to prove that God sent not those plagues upon him, but that *Moses* wrought them some other way, his Enchanters could do as much as that came to, till at last they cried out, *It is the finger of God.* Now in such a judgment as want, and famine, to weaken the strength of nature, to make that fruitful womb of the earth barren to us, none but God can do it. He only can *make the heavens as Brass, and the earth as Iron*, and restrain the celestial influences. Can man *bind the sweet influences of Pleiades? or loose the bonds of Orion?* *Job.* 38. 31. Can any but God, forbid the Clouds to drop fatness? No, these Judgments are *ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἔσονται*, we must cry out, *God fights against us.*

5. Famine, it is a Scourge wherewith he uses to chastise a people, as being a comprehensive Judgment, like a chain-shot that bears all before it. Many other calamities that are brought upon us by humane means, are most-what avoidable by human helps. Wisdom, or riches, or strength may exempt, or secure from some other annoyances; but scarcity, and famine, that strikes at the life of every man. All must beg *dayly bread.* *The profit of the earth is for all; the King himself is served by the field,* *Eccles.* 5. 9. No King can help against this Judgment. *If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? Out of the barr floor, or out of the wine-press?* said the King of Israel, in the famine of Samaria, *2 Kings* 6. 27. These extremities are unavoidable; They will make us look up to heaven, and say with *Jehosaphat*, *O Lord, we have no might against this Judgment that comes upon us, Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are towards thee,* *2. Chron* 20. 12.

III. A third Extraction from the Text is, Gods own children and servants, are lyable to these extremities of want and scarcity, which God brings upon the world, as well as others. The Prophet here in his own name, and in the name of the Church, hath a fearful apprehension of them.

Indeed, sometimes, and in some Judgments, God vouchsafes a special exemption to his Church and Children. Instance in three cases;

1. To preserve an holy portion of his People, and a Nursery for his Church. *Isaiah* acknowledges it, *Chap* 1. 9. *Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a small remnant, we should have been as Sodom and like unto Gomorrah.* Still a remnant shall be saved. And *St. Paul* applies it to the preservation of his chosen People, *Rom.* 9. 29. Gods Church must remain to all posterity, no Judgment must sweep them all away. In this case, when common Judgments are sent upon the world, he exempts his own. When the deluge came upon the old world, an Ark was provided to save *Noah*, and the holy seed. When he visits them, he doth it in measure, he makes not a full end of them.

2. God exempts his own People from common Judgments, when the Judgments are sent in the cause of his Church, to manifest and maintain that they are his People, and that their sufferings from the world, are most unjust, then usually he puts a difference, and exempts his own from common calamities. Thus in all the plagues of *Egypt* *Goshen* was privileged; he puts a difference betwixt the Hebrews, and the Egyptians; he passed over them, when he plagued their enemies. Thus in the case of famine, *Isaiah* tells the enemies of Gods People; *Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; Behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; Behold, my servants shall rejoyce, but ye shall be ashamed;* *Isai.* 65. 13. *Malachi* assures them of this exemption, and that God will make it appear Who are his, *Chap.* 3. 17. *In that day, when I make up my jewels, I will spare them, as a man spares his own Son that serves him; and then shall ye discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serves him not.*

3. In the punishment of those sins, which his children have withstood, opposed, protested against, and mourned for; usually in that case, God exempts such

Serm. I. Saints, and Servants of his. This obtained *Lot's* exemption out of *Sodom's* overthrow, he mourned for the abominations that were done in *Sodom*, and *St. Peter* makes it a ruling case, and argues from it, *2 Pet. 2. 5. If God spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person a Preacher of Righteousness*; and in the overthrow of *Sodom*, *vers. 7. delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked*; thence he gathers this Conclusion, *vers. 9. The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation.* This protected *Jeremiah*, and kept him out of captivity. This holy carriage exempted *Baruch*; his life was given him for a prey. Those that mourned for the abominations of the Land, were marked out by God for escape, and deliverance, *Ezek. 9. 4.*

But out of these, and the like cases, 'tis true, Gods own people and servants are subject to these common calamities, and judgments, as well as others. *Abraham* and his family, are by famine driven into *Egypt*, *Gen. 12.* So *Isaac* and his family, were driven into the *Philistines* country, *Gen. 16.* And *Jacob*, and his family, by want, were driven into *Egypt*. Thus the People of God in *David's* time, suffered a famine of three years. *Elias* that great Prophet, was forced out of the land of *Israel*, into *Sarepta*, by reason of want.

The Saints have their share and portion in these common calamities upon divers Reasons;

1. The differences, that God puts 'twixt his own and others, are not seen in the administration of these outward things, not in making their portion in riches, and outward prosperity, more full than others. As he makes the wicked partakers of temporal blessings, *his Sun, and his Rain doth good to them, Matth. 5. 45.* So his temporal judgments fall upon the righteous, as well as upon the unrighteous, *Communia esse voluit, & commoda profanis, & incommoda suis, Tertul. Solomon observes it, Eccles. 9. 1. No man knows love, or hatred, by all that is before them; all things come alike, to the righteous, and to the wicked.* The privileges of Gods People are not temporal, but spiritual; not exemption from common sufferings, but grace and comfort in them; that's the Saints portion. Otherwise, Religion would not be a matter of faith, but sense; and men would serve God, not for piety, but for plenty.

2. The Saints are partakers in these common sufferings, as being parts and members of those Societies and People who are thus punished. A Christian, is both *filius Seculi*, and *filius Dei*. He hath that in him, which belongs to the present Generation, as well as that which pertains to the state of Regeneration. Now, the sins of any body, or Nation, may involve all the members in the same Judgment. *Hec mala, nos quoque perstringunt, ut vobis inherentes.* *Lot* was carried away in the Captivity of *Sodom*, as cohabiting with them. As in personal sins, the Father's sin doth subject the Son to punishment, *quia filius pars patris*; all *Achans* Family was destroyed for *Achans* Sacrilege; so, in national sins, the Saints of God, though personally innocent, yet because members of a nocent body, are liable to undergo the temporal smart of national Judgments.

3. The Servants of God, are often contributors to the common heap of sin, that brings down Judgments. Though they be not actors of those gross impieties that call for vengeance; yet their sins, though of a smaller nature, adds to the fewel of Gods indignation. Gross impieties are like Pitch, or Gunpowder, that enrages the fire; but even the sins of Gods Servants, are combustible matter, and do add to the flame. Thus, not only *Manasses* his blood-shed, but even good *Hezekiah* his vanity, and boasting of his riches, brought upon the Land the *Babylonish* Captivity.

Saint *Augustine* meditates upon this point piously; and gives reasons, why good Christians are involved in common calamities.

1. *Quamvis longè absint à flagitiis, non tamen à delictis*; Sinners they are, though not outrageous ones; and their sins, may be, are *tanto crebriora, quanto minora.* Small sins frequently committed, are just provocations,

2. They

2. They are punish'd here with wicked men, saith he, *Quia non sic vivunt cum impiis, ut cum iis vivendum est.* They suffer with wicked men; because living with them, they do not teach them, and admonish them, and reprove them, and mourn for them.
3. Saints suffer in temporal things, because, though they do not luxuriously abuse them, yet, saith he, they do too much enjoy them. *Simul cum impiis flagellantur, non quia simul agunt malam vitam, sed quia simul amant temporalem vitam; non equaliter, sed tamen simul.*

We have seen the Supposition; Come we now;

Secondly, To the resolution; though all these evils come upon us, *Yet will I rejoice in the Lord*—

And here are two prints of Piety in this Speech of the Prophet;

1. Is implied in this Particle, *Although*; that's an act of forecast; these miseries may befall us.

2. Is implied in this Particle, *Yet*; that's an act of preparation against these miseries.

1. *Quamvis, Although*, that forecasts the misery.

2. *Tamen, Yet*, that forelays the Remedy.

Providet, He foresees sorrows in the first.

Providet, He provides against them in the second.

1. He forecasts it, that miseries and afflictions may, nay, will befall us. That's one point of wisdom, and print of piety, to forecast it in our thoughts. Prosperity will not hold always; we must look for changes. Summer will not last all the year long, a Winter will come; and with it storms, and tempests. It was Solomon's Counsel, *Ecclesi. 11. 8. If a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many.* It is good to premeditate on evil days, to acquaint our selves with the thoughts of poverty, and sickness, and adversity, and mortality. It will have a threefold good operation upon thee.

1. It will moderate thy care, and pursuit after these outward things. What shall I toil, and vex my self to get that which I cannot hold? but must part withal, I know not how soon. 'Tis Solomon's advice, *Prov. 23. 4. Labour not to be rich, cease from thine own wisdom; Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves Wings, they fly away like an Eagle towards Heaven.* Certainly they will do so. All the certainty that is in them is, that they are uncertain.

2. This Forecast, it will moderate thy delight in them. Wilt thou place thy joy in that which thou canst not enjoy? It will make us we shall not, *apponere cor*, not set our hearts upon them.

3. 'Twill moderate our sorrow in parting with them. It is good to look dangers and miseries in the face before-hand. Acquaint thy self with them, it will take off the horror and dreadfulness of them. Unlook'd-for calamities seem dismal to us; but foresight breeds acquaintance; that when they befall us, we shall not be dismayed with them. That's the first, he forecasts them.

2. As he forecasts them; so, in this Particle *Yet*, he provides against them. And that sets out the holy entertainment which the Prophet will give to this foreseen Calamity.

1. Tell an Atheist, a Judgment is coming from God, he entertains those threatnings with derision. *Let him hasten his works, that we may see it*, said those mockers in the Prophet, *Isai. 5. 19.*

2. Tell a voluptuous man of it, that poverty and scarcity is approaching. What saith he? Let's then enjoy the World while we may, let's Crown our selves with Rose-buds before they be withered, *Let's eat, and drink, for to morrow we shall die.*

3. Tell a Worldling, that want and poverty is a coming, what saith he? Let's store up then, and provide against it, lay up against a dear year, fence out Gods Judgments when they shall besiege us, keep them out from entering

Serm. I. upon us. These, and such as these, are the thoughts of carnal men. Ey, but this Scripture offers more grace. The piety of the Prophet hath other apprehensions of Judgments, and are far other resolutions for the undergoing of them.

And this Piety in the Prophet appears in two degrees, that make it more remarkable.

1. Here is the low degree of the affliction; he takes it at the worst; he supposeth himself not only in some necessity, but in extremity, in want of all outward things. He saith not, Only if I have food, and raiment, though but hard fare, and coarse Cloathing, it shall suffice; He submits not only to *Agur's* portion, *Neither riches, nor poverty, but food convenient* to sustain nature; He stops not a *Micajah's* diet, *Bread of affliction, and water of affliction*; No, he knows how to undergo the loss of all things. Let poverty come upon him as an armed man, and spoil him of all; yet his heart will hold up, he is not dismayed. Ey, here is Piety in the strength, and highest improvement. That will not capitulate with God, how much it will suffer, and no more, but will resolve to bear the heaviest burthen, submit to the sharpest affliction, and undergo it holily.

2. The Prophets Piety is seen in another degree, that's the high degree of affection, with which he will entertain this great affliction.

1. He makes not only use of his patience; he will suffer patiently, and meekly, he will not murmur at it.

2. He resolves, not only to be content with it, and well pleased with this condition; that's a degree higher. Patience suffers it, but Contentment feels it not. Contentment, is an *Autarchie*, it feels no want. But the Prophet rises higher;

3. He knows how to rejoice in affliction. Joy, that's the affection that belongs to happiness, and felicity. *Καὶ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς εὐφροσύνης, Chrysost.* In the day of prosperity, rejoice; but in the day of adversity, consider, saith *Solomon, Eccles. 7. 14.* Sad thoughts, one would think, are then seasonable. No, here the Prophet can rejoice in the day of adversity. Nay, more, as *S. Paul* exhorts, *Rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice, Phil. 4. 4.* So here, this Feast of Joy, hath two Courses;

1. *I will rejoice in the Lord.*

2. *I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

TWO
SERMONS
PREACHED
ON
EASTER-DAY.

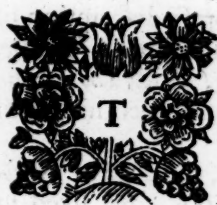
The First Sermon.

Job 19. 25, 26, 27.

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth:

And though after my skin, Worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh, shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed, within me.



His Text is a Prophecie and Prediction of our Saviour *Christs* glorious Resurrection; the great benefit, and mystery of our Religion, which the Christian Church doth this day celebrate. A Sacred Truth, requiring not only the Assent, but the Devotion, and Adoration of our Faith. The work of this day lays the greatest proofs of *Christs* God-head, and Divinity. He was declared to be the Son of God, by the Resurrection from the dead, Rom. 1. 4. And, when God was to bring his Son back

from the Grave, this, and the like Prophecies, as *Ushers*, attended him, and proclaimed before him, as *Pharaoh* before *Joseph*, *Abrech*, *Bow the knee*. *Let all the Angels of God worship him; Let every knee bow before him; Let every tongue confess him; Let every Soul receive, and embrace him.*

'Tis true, the incredulous, unbelieving Jews labour to obscure, and deface this, and all other Prophecies of *Christs* Resurrection; and, by a mis-construction to draw it away to another sense. They answer all these Prophecies, as *Esay* complaineth of them, Chap. 30. 10. *They say to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesie not unto us right things, but prophesie to us deceit.*

The Jews, they pervert the Text, and some other Expositors mistake it; and draw down the height and mystery of this speech, to an inferiour sense. But generally, the most Ancient, and most Orthodox Interpreters, do fasten their Meditations upon this Text, as a clear and undoubted prediction of our Saviours Resurrection. And this sense we embrace, and so apprehend the words as a Prophetical prediction, and faithful confession of our Saviours victory, and triumph over the power of death.

And, it is of good use to look back to these Prophecies, even after their fulfilling

Serm. I. ling: As the Angel spake this day to the women at the Sepulchre, *Come see the place, where the Lord was laid*; The emptiness of the grave proved that he was risen: So, even after *Christ* is risen, it is of use to our faith, to review these Prophecies; Come see the place that foretold his rising again; the fulfilling of these Texts will greatly confirm our faith of his Resurrection. As in your purchases, and possessions, though you be already seized and stated in them, yet ye desire to get in all former Conveyances, to strengthen your tenure: So, though you be possess'd of this days benefit, yet these Prophecies are as our fore-fathers records; we claim these Testimonies as our Inheritance; our Faith holds by them.

To reflect upon these Prophecies, will confirm our belief in all other Truths, as yet to be fulfilled; *Impleta credimus, impleri videmus, implenda confidimus*, saith St. Augustine: It will put Davids Song into our mouths; *As we have heard, so have we seen*: Heard it foretold, Seen it fulfill'd. We may sing with the Psalmist, *All the ways of the Lord, are Mercy and Truth*: Mercy in Promising, Truth in Performing. We may confess with Solomon, *Blessed be the Lord, who spake it with his mouth; and hath with his hand fulfilled it*. We may open our Text, as *Christ* did; *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears*; our Faith may safely set to its Seal, That God is true.

For the words themselves, they report unto us a memorable, remarkable Prophecie of the Resurrection; of a double Resurrection:

1. Here *Job* fore-sees, and fore-tells the Resurrection of *Christ*. He tells us, That *Christ* who by his Death Redeem'd him, hath again obtain'd an endless Life; That after his fall by Death, he is recovered, and got up again; stands, and shall stand last upon the earth.
2. He Prophecies of his own resurrection, That though he were now in a dying condition, death had already seiz'd upon him; yet he knew there was hope in his death, that he should be raised from the grave of corruption, to an everliving and blessed state and condition.

Now, surely this is a Text of Scripture worthy of all acceptation, much to be set by, both for the clearness, and evidence of it, and also for the date it bears, and print of Antiquity.

1. 'Tis a clear Prophecie; there is not a fuller, more express description of the Resurrection, in all the Scripture, than this of *Job's*. He speaks like an Apostle, rather than a Prophet. *O virum ante Evangelium, Evangelicum!* With *Thomas*, he puts his hand into *Christ's* side, he holds and embraces him, and then his Faith worships and adores his Redeemer; *My Lord, and my God*.

2. And then there is another Excellency that commends it, the date of Antiquity. They all agree, that *Moses* was the Pen-man of this Book. *Job* lived in *Moses* his time, or before him. St. *Chrysostom* reckons him the fourth from *Esa*. So timely a Prophecie of our Saviours Death and Resurrection, 'tis a rare Monument. S. *Peter* tells us, that *Christ's* Resurrection was the Purchase of our Inheritance. Now, in matters of Inheritance, the ancientest Deeds and Conveyances are always the best. Here is a Court-roll written by *Moses*, the first Pen-man that God ever employed; and here is a Copy taken up by *Job*, one of the Primitive Saints, and by him conveyed to the Church for ever. It was a matter of debasement to S. *Paul*, that he had *Posthumam fidem Resurrectionis*; Last of all he was seen of me, as born out of due time, 1 Cor. 15. Contrary, 'tis a great Dignity to *Job*, that he is *Primogenitus Fidei*; First of all he was seen by him. His Faith hath the Birth-right of all the Saints in the Old Scripture. It was the high praise of those good Women in the Gospel, that they rose early to go to the Sepulchre. *Job's* Faith out-strips them all, carries him betimes to the grave of *Christ*; he believes, and confesses his Resurrection.

The words then, they set out unto us a lively Profession of *Job's* Faith. *Job*, indeed, is propounded to us as a pattern of patience, *Jam. 5. Ye have heard of the Patience of Job*: And it was most remarkable. But yet patience, it is not an original vertue; but springs, and arises from some other Grace. 'Tis *Filia Fidei*, the

the Daughter of Faith, *Rom. 5.* It flows from Faith. Would you know what made *Job* so patient in all his afflictions? Here is the Mother, and Breeder, and Supporter of his Patience; his Faith of a Redemption, and a Resurrection, made him endure all. *I should utterly have fainted, but that I believe to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the Living, saith David, Psal. 116.* So should *Job*; his Faith kept him from fainting. Nay, not only so, saith *S. Paul, Rom. 5.* but by virtue of true Faith, *We glory in Tribulations.* It makes *Job* endure them, chearfully, comfortably, and even to glory in them.

So then, let us a little vary the Apostle's Expression, and say, We have heard of the Faith of *Job*. He makes a double Profession of it in the Text:

1. Here is his Belief concerning *Christ*. Then,
2. Here is his Belief and Confidence concerning himself.

First, His Profession concerning *Christ*. Wherein three things are observable; all of them requisite in a right Believer:

1. Here is *Salvificum Objectum*; the Saving Object of his Faith, that's *Christ*, in three main Articles of Faith to be believed:

1. *Quod Redemptor*; that he was his Redeemer.
2. *Quod Vivit*; that his Redeemer was dead, and is alive again; that's *Christ's* Resurrection.
3. *Quod Judicabit*; he believes that he shall appear again at the last day to judge the quick and the dead. *He hath redeemed me, He rose again for me; He shall judge, and absolve, and give sentence for me*: That's the first thing considerable, the Matter and Object of his Faith.

2. In his Profession; here is the Act of his Faith, and that is strong, and lively, full of assurance: He staggers not through unbelief, but is fully perswaded of it: It is *Scio*, I know it, and I am well assured of it. And then,

3. Here is *Appropriatio Fidei*, his Personal Interest that he claims in *Christ*, and in all his benefits, in *Meus*; he is Mine; died, and rose again, and will come at the latter day for my good and benefit. He contents not himself with a Catholick Profession of these Truths in general; but possesses himself of them, makes them his own by a close application.

- I. See the Object of *Job's* Faith; that is,

1. *Christ*, a Redeemer:
2. *Christ*, alive from the dead:
3. *Christ's* appearing again at the last day. These three are the stays and

props of his hope, the supporters of his comfort. And briefly take a double view of them:

1. In reference to *Job*, who makes this holy Profession.
2. View them in themselves.

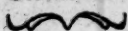
1. *Job's* Faith acknowledges *Christ* his Redeemer, Raifer, Judge; It was the Faith which he lived by. And the Excellency of this Profession will appear, if we take notice of *Job* in three Considerations:

1. *Job* a Patriarch; one long before the Gospel was revealed: In the first and primitive times of the Church, he speaks of *Christ*, fastens upon him, and comforts himself in him.

1. It is the great Efficacy of our Saviours Mediation; the virtue of it was operative in all differences of time: It was effectual and sovereign at the greatest distance. It comforted *Job*, it rejoiced *Abraham*; nay, it recovered *Adam*. The *Arrians* blasphemy of his Deity, 'tis as false also of his Mediatorious Efficacy; *Tempus fuit, quando non fuit*. No, he was yesterday, and to day, and the same for ever. *Chrysostom* puts this difference 'twixt the Sacrifices of *Christ*, and of those under the Law: They were renew'd, and oftentimes offer'd *Christ* died but once, and found *Eternal Redemption*: They were like weak Plaisters, shifted and changed every day; *Christ's* Bloud was *Efficax pharmacum, quod semel impositum, semper sanat*: By one offering of himself, he hath perfected for ever all them that are sanctified, *Heb. 10.*

2. It

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2. It is the great Excellency of our Christian Faith, that the Church, before *Christ*, received and embraced it. The Prophets, as well as the Apostles, they all saw his Glory, and spake of him. They who went before, as well as they who came after, all sung *Hosanna* to this *Son of David*. The Gospel, it is of greatest Antiquity. *The Law* (saith *S. Paul*) *came in afterwards*. The Gospel hath the Birth-right; it put forth the hand first. The Skarlet thred, dip'd in *Christ's* blood, testifies for it, though the Law took place for a time, and seem'd to be Elder. 'Tis a great support for our Faith, that we believe in him, whom all the Saints, and Patriarchs rested on. Thus *S. Paul* takes off the scandal of novelty, which the Jews cast on the Gospel, *Acts* 26. *I am judg'd for the hope of the Promise made by God to our Fathers; Why should it be thought a thing incredible to you, that God should raise the dead?* It was this day, that *Abraham* desired to see, and he saw it, and was glad. That day, say some, was the day of the Resurrection: Then, when he offer'd up *Isaac*, *Accounting that God was able to raise him up from the dead, from whence he received him in a figure*. The mystery of this day, *Abraham* rejoiced in. That's the first, *Job* a Patriarch.

2. *Job* a Gentile, none of the Lineage of *Israel*, a Stranger in the Land of *Uz*, he lays claim to the Redeemer; he builds his Faith on *Christ's* Resurrection. Gentiles, as well as Jews, some in every Nation, have their share and portion in *Christ's* Resurrection. *Christ* preached this Truth at his first Sermon at *Nazareth*, *Luke* 4. *Naaman* the Syrian, and the Widow of *Sareptha*, both of them Heathens, yet God visited them, and sent Salvation to them. In both Stories they were remarkable Types of the Resurrection. *Naaman's* corrupt flesh, restored as the flesh of a young Child; all whole, and sound again. The Widow of *Sareptha's* Son rais'd from the dead again: Two great signs of the Resurrection. The great Prefiguration of *Christ's* Resurrection was performed among the Heathen. *Jonah* devoured by the Whale, and after three days restored again: That sign was done at *Nineveh*, the head City of the Gentiles. This mystery of the Resurrection, *Christ* himself preached to the Gentiles, *Job*. 12. When Greeks came to *Christ* (and they were Gentiles) he acquainted them with the Doctrine of his Resurrection: *If the Wheat-Corn die not, it abides alone; but if it die, it brings forth much fruit*. The first great Manifestation of his Resurrection to all his Disciples, it was in *Galilee of the Gentiles*: *Go into Galilee, there you shall see me*. From *Galilee* this preaching began, *How that God raised up Christ the third day, Acts* 10. 'Tis the foundation of our hope; we are *Sinners of the Gentiles*. So that Gentiles as well as Jews, *Job* as well as *Moses*, are admitted into the fellowship of his Redemption, and Resurrection.

3. *Job* a Just Man, highly commended for his Sanctity, and Piety; yet see, he lays hold upon this as his only claim, That *Christ* is his Redeemer from death and destruction. Not only notorious sinners, but the chiefest Saints stand in need of a Saviour, must trust to a Redeemer: desire to be partakers in his Resurrection.

1. That they are Saints, they owe it unto him: They are the Children of God, because they are Children of the Resurrection, *Luke* 20. 36.

2. And when they are Saints, yet so short is their Sanctity, so full of failings, that the best of them all must shelter themselves under his Redemption. *Their own garments do defile them*, saith *Job*. Their garments, that's their virtues, that beautifie and adorn them; yet these cast a soil and defilement upon them. *S. Paul* disclaims his own perfection, and righteousness, desires to know *Christ*, and the power of his Resurrection. Our Sanctification, 'tis not our fundamental Title to Heaven, but our Redemption. *Gloriabor, non quia justus, sed quia redemptus*, saith *Bernard*. Our first Resurrection from sin, is so lame, and imperfect, that the second death might still lay hold on us, were it not overcome by *Christ's* Resurrection.

That's

That's the first Consideration of this Object of Faith in reference to *Job*; *Serm. I.*
Job a Patriarch, a Gentile, a just man; In all these three respects, he professes his interest in *Christ's* Death and Resurrection.

2. Let's view these Particulars in themselves.

1. *Christ* a Redeemer.

2. *Christ* alive from the dead; and then,

3. *Christ* appearing at the latter day. The improvement of these three Titles, makes up our Salvation.

1. His Redemption, that made the Purchase for us. 'Tis call'd, *The Purchase of the inheritance*, *Ephes. 1.* And then,

2. His Resurrection, that seals up the Title, and conveys the Title to us. Our Justification, which entitles us to Heaven, 'tis ascribed to his Resurrection; *Rom. 4.* *He was delivered to death for our sins, and rose again for our justification.*

3. His last Appearing, that gives us livery and seisin, and actual possession. We shall then be taken up into the Heavens, and be ever with the Lord. All these three are necessary, we can spare none of them.

1. His Redemption is necessary; If not redeem'd by his death, *we shall not be saved by his life*, *Rom. 8.* *Christ* must first be our Redeemer, then after he will become our Raiser, and Absolver. First, make sure of thy Redemption, and then promise to thy self a joyful Resurrection. Get sin pardoned, and death shall be vanquished. The sting of death, it is sin. Dis-arm death of its sting, and 'tis easily overcome. It is the order and method that *Hezekiah's* Faith observed, *Isaiah 38.* *Thou hast in love to my soul delivered me from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. Thou wilt not give thine holy One to see corruption. Solum sanctum*, saith Bernard, *non viderit corruptionem.* 'Tis that, that embalms our bodies, and keeps them from corruption. Without out this first, our right in his Redemption; the two other, his Resurrection, and last Appearance, will afford us small comfort. Had he not died for us, and by it redeemed us, it were better for us, He had never rose again; the tidings of his Resurrection, it would be matter of fear, and dismay, and astonishment to us. When *Herod* thought that *John* was risen from the dead, he was troubled, and perplexed at it. The Soldiers who watch'd *Christ's* Grave, were as dead men, at his Resurrection. *Bring those mine Enemies, and slay them before me.* They who have despised the blood of his Redemption, nothing remains for them, but *Heb. 10. 27.* *φοβερά ἐκδοχή κρίσεως*, a fearful looking for of judgment. O! his redeemed ones, lift up your heads for joy; your redemption draws near; but ye despisers, hang down your heads for sorrow; your confusion approaches. That's the first, He must be Redeemptor.

2. It must be *Redemptor vivit.* Our Saviour, who hath redeemed us by his death, must recover, and revive, and live again. His resurrection puts life, and efficacy into his redemption. Indeed, there is but cold comfort in a dead Saviour. You know what his two Disciples thought of his death, as they went to *Emmans*; *We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*, but he is dead, and our hopes are dead with him, *Luke 24.* Had he not rose again, the scoff of the Jews had been too true of him; *He saved others, himself he could not save, let him come down from the Cross*; nay, let him die on the Cross, and rise out of his Grave, and then we will believe on him.

1. Our Redeemer must rise, and live again, how else should he overcome death? He must redeem us from our Enemies, (and death is one of them, saith *S. Paul.*) Death overcame him when he died, but He overcame Death, when he rose again. *He was crucified through weakness, but he lives by the power of God*, *2 Cor. 13. 4.*

2. He must rise again, how else could he apply the virtue of his death, and make it effectual? The High-Priest was not only to shed the blood of the Sacrifice, but he was to sprinkle it on the people, and to go into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, and present it before God. In his Passion, he shed

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his blood ; but the tendering it to God, and sprinkling it upon us, that depended on his resurrection.

3. He must rise, and live again, to quicken and revive our hope in his redemption. *He raised him from the dead, saith S. Peter, 1 Epist. 1. that our faith, and hope might be in God. We are begotten to a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, saith the same Apostle.* The Sun, when it is at the farthest, keeps life in the root of a Tree; but 'tis the approaching of the Sun, that brings life into the branches. When *Christ* was in the Grave, the sap of our hope sunk all into the Root, but his return from the Grave, brought sap into the branches.

3. His standing on the Earth is necessary, at his last appearance (I will but name it). It is one main end of his Resurrection; By it he was sealed and authorized to be the supreme Judge of quick and dead. *Acts 17. 31. He hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Joseph was not only enlarged out of Prison, but advanced to the place of Government and Judicature; The Egyptians, and all his Brethren must bow before him.

1. This Prerogative of *Christ*, 'tis the reward of his Passion; for it, he is made Lord of quick and dead.

2. 'Tis the full finishing, and the accomplishment of his mediation. He shall then present us to God his Father; *Lo, here I am, and those whom thou hast given me!*

3. 'Tis the full possessing of his redeemed ones, of their purchased inheritance. *Come ye blessed of my Father, enter into your possession.*

4. 'Tis the glory of his exaltation; then all Thrones shall be cast down, and be made his footstool, and he alone shall be exalted in judgment.

We have done with the object of *Job's* Faith. Come we now,

II. To the Act, in *Scio, I know*; A word of confidence, and great assurance. It fully expresses the nature of Faith; it is strongly perswaded of what it believes; it puts it beyond Ifs, and Ands, and hopeful supposals. Faith, it is an evidence, not a conjecture, not, *ὑποθέσις*, but an *ὑπόστασις*; not a supposition, but a subsistence. It is not, as the Philosopher in *Snidas* defines it, *σποδίζησις τῆς ὑπολήψεως*, a vehement surmise only, but a firm assurance: *Can these dead bones live, saith God to Ezekiel? Lord, thou knowest, saith the Prophet.* Put the question to *Job*; yes, I know they can; nay, more than so, I know they shall live.

And this knowledge of *Job* will appear the greater, and more admirable, his belief in this point of Faith, being beset with three great Impediments;

1. There is *Magna difficultas*; that's one Impediment, the Resurrection of the dead. To insist on that which is proper to the Day. 'Tis a matter beyond all reach of reason. Nature helps forward the belief of some points of Faith; but this of the Resurrection 'tis, *res pure fidei*, far beyond all conceit of reason. The great men of reason, at *Athens*, laugh at *Paul*, when he preach'd the Resurrection. The Philosopher in his disputes about the Soul, makes *ἀνάστασις* an impossible absurdity, not to be admitted. *Recta ratio* (which some make the standard of all Religion) stammers, and stumbles at this Article; *How can it be?* Faith only resolves it. *Sufficit pro universis, rationibus, Autor Deus*, is nothing impossible to an Omnipotent God, nothing incredible to an omniscient Faith.

In these Mysteries, saith St. *Augustine*, Christians must not be *rationales*, but *fideles*. 'Tis the homage our Understanding owes to God, to believe what we cannot comprehend, saith *Parisensis*. It is one rare property of faith, it hath *Vim satisfactivam*; it will satisfy all doubts; it will assuage all difficulties. Ask a natural man, Is it possible *Christ* should rise again? No, it is impossible. Ask St. *Peter* what faith he? It is impossible but he should rise again: *Acts 2. 20. Him hath God raised, having loosed the pains of death, because it was impossible he should be holden of it.* Here is the triumph of *Job's* faith; *Credo, quia impossibile est*. These Mysteries are *Stulta mundi*, but *Decus fidei*; our faith glories in them.

2. Another

2. Another Impediment in *Job's* faith, that makes it more admirable, was, *Serm. I.*
Magna distantia; Things at a distance are not discernable. It was the Oeconomy of Divine revelation, the mysteries of our Christian faith were but dimly discovered to the faith of our fore-fathers; *I shall see him, but not now, I shall behold him, but not nigh.* And it is observable, The nearer the accomplishment of Prophecies, the clearer were the Predictions. The Cocks, the nearer to the Sun-rising, the louder they crow. But, the time *Job* lived in, it was but *Conticinium fidei*, yet see, he speaks of *Christ's* and his own resurrection, as expressly and plainly, as if it were near at hand. *Videndo credere*, that's *Thomas* his faith; he saw *Christ* was risen, and therefore believed; *Plus oculo, quàm oraculo credit*; but, *Credendo videre*, that's *Job's* faith, he believed it as fully, as if he had seen it clearly. This is the benefit of faith's prospective, it brings the remotest things home to the eye. It is *Quoddam æternitatis exemplar, præterita, præsentia, futura vastissimo quodam sinu comprehendit*; it sees at all distances, and fathoms eternity.
3. There was a third Impediment to *Job's* faith; that was *Magna contrarietas*. Distance hinders sight; but darkness, and indisposition of the Air, much more. Yet *Job*, in the thickest mist of contrariety, and contradiction, sees clearly, believes assuredly: God afflicts him, sets him as his enemy; yet, *Scio quod Redemptor*, he is still my Redeemer; though he slays me, nay, while he slays me, *I will put my trust in him*. Temptations from Satan, disheartnings from friends, afflictions from God, *Job* looks through them all, sees comforts beyond them. To know God a Redeemer, while he is a punisher; a quickner, and a raiser, while he is a killer; an acquitter, and absolver, when he writes bitter things against him; *O Job, great is thy faith!* Sure he was not to learn this now in his adversity; he hath studied this point long, acquainted himself with it; now, in affliction and death, how it refreshes him? Weak Faith may serve in fair weather, when all goes well with thee; but when terrors from God, temptations from Satan, and discomforts from men beset thee, nothing but this *Scio* will support thee: Weak Faith cannot breed strong consolation.

That's the second; *Scio*, a clear apprehension. The next follows, and that is, III. In *Meus*; his close application. *Scio*, that was the eye of Faith, it beheld him clearly; but *Meus*, My Redeemer, that's the hand of Faith, and holds him firmly. It is the property of Saving Faith; it hath *vim idominandi*, it hath a force to appropriate, and make *Christ* our own. Without this, a general remote belief would have been cold comfort. *He loved Me, and gave himself for Me*, saith St. Paul. What saith St. Chrysostom? Did *Christ* dye only for St. Paul? No, *Non excludit, sed appropriat*; He excludes not others, but he will secure himself. This word *Meus*, doth *facere Deum, possessionem nostram*, saith St. Augustine, in *Psal. 32*. make God our own. It is the ligature and joynit of Faith that incorporates us into *Christ* *ὁ κολλημένος τῷ Θεῷ*, it glues us to the Lord, and makes us one Spirit with him. *Job*, in his *Scio*, did not glance, but fix upon him here in *Meus*. He uses no light touchings, but close embracings. *My Well-beloved is mine and I am his*: And again, *My Well-beloved is as a bundle of Myrrh, that lies betwixt my Breasts*. A general, notional, catholick Faith, walks in a Garden of Myrrh, that's pleasant and delightful; but this special Faith, that *Job* stays by, gathers this Myrrh, binds it in a bundle, lays it twixt his Breasts, that's fragrant and comfortable. This application, 'tis always useful, especially when we are in *Job's* case. Temptations, and Afflictions, they will make us run to God, clasp fast about him: *Dens Meus, Deus Meus*, in the closest application.

We have done with the first particular of the Text, *Job's* Faith of *Christ's* Resurrection: Come we now to the

Second, the faithful Profession he makes of his own; That although death had already seiz'd upon him, yet he was assur'd he should rise again, and be made partaker of a joyful Resurrection.

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That we may take a more full view of this holy Profession, and observe the many Excellencies that shew forth themselves in this Faith of his, we will reduce all to three observable Particulars :

1. *Veritas Fidei*; There we shall see those Truths that are couch'd here in *Job's* holy Profession and thence we shall learn the dogmatical part of this sacred mystery of our Resurrection.
2. *Pietas Fidei*; The many Evidences of Piety and Devotion, which appears in this Profession of Faith, of his Resurrection.
3. *Beneficium Fidei*; The many seasonable and useful advantages of his Faith, which this holy man found in this Meditation, and Profession.

First, observe the several Truths included in this Faith of *Job*, concerning his own Resurrection: Reduce them all to these three heads.

1. Here is *Certitudo resurrectionis propriae*: He apprehends the truth of his own Resurrection with fullest assurance. *I know* it; that word of certainty belongs not only to this Faith of *Christ's* Resurrection, but it sets out the confidence he had of his own.

Christ's Resurrection and ours are made two several Articles of our Creed. First, we believe *Christ rose the third day*; then again, we believe *the Resurrection of the body*, that we shall rise also. Now Divines observe, that which makes several Articles of our Faith, are the several difficulties, that are in those Articles, which we profess to believe. Now our Resurrection carries with it the shew of some difficulty, and improbability, that appear not in *Christ's* Resurrection; so that a man may yield to the truth of *Christ's* Resurrection, and yet stick at ours, and doubt and question that.

1. *Christ* was God; it was easie for him to raise up himself. *He had power to lay down his life and power to take it up again*, at pleasure. But *Job*, and all we, are frail, and weak Creatures; when the pit hath shut her mouth upon us, how shall we rise again?
2. Tho' *Christ* were dead, and so his soul sever'd from his body, yet his God-head and divinity were still united to it. His dead body, was the body of the Son of God; still supported, and sustained by the Deity; and so being united to the Fountain of life, 'tis more conceivable that he should revive, and live again.
3. *Christ's* Body in the Grave saw no corruption, or putrefaction, no incineration, turn'd not into Dust and Ashes; lay but three days in the Grave, and revived. *Job's* body, and ours, shall be eaten with Worms, turn'd to Corruption, rotted in the Grave many hundred years.

It is easier then to conceive *Christ's* Resurrection, than to believe ours. Yet *Job*, ye see, sets his *Scio* to both: *I know*, *Christ* is risen; and notwithstanding all these improbabilities, I am sure (he speaks it as knowingly) *I know*, I shall arise. Both Articles must be believed with the same assurance.

We are told by some, that those Truths that concern *Christ*, and the Church in general, you may believe firmly, and certainly say, I know them; but for those Truths that concern our selves in particular, That *Christ* hath Redeemed me, Sanctified me, will Raise me to Life and Glory, there is no *Scio* for them; we cannot be sure of them; hope well we may, but with contrary doubtings and suspicions. No, in all Gods Promises, Faith must labour to work out assurance. *Quod propter Deum creditur, equaliter creditur*. If God saith, Faith assures it self of it. It is the infirmity of Faith to doubt, not the duty of Faith. Then Faith works kindly, when to every Truth reveal'd, it sets to its *Scio*. That's the first, *Certitudo Fidei*.

2. Here in this Profession of *Job*, is *Fundatio Resurrectionis*; the ground and foundation that he lays to his Faith of his own Resurrection. Why is *Job* sure he shall rise again? Because he is sure that *Christ* is risen? First he knows, *Christ* is alive; then he infers, I shall live again.

Our Resurrection is founded and built upon *Christ's* Resurrection. 'Tis that that gives

gives footing and fastning to our Faith. Still the Apostle infers our Resurrection *Serm. I.*
from that of *Christs*. *He that raised Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, Rom. 8.* And this Inference, 'tis good upon three grounds:

1. *Christs* Resurrection, 'tis *Argumentum possibilitatis*. We may strongly argue from *Christs* Resurrection, to the possibility of ours. If God rais'd him, the same power can raise us also. *Tota ratio facti*, it is *Potentia facientis*. Omnipotency sticks at no difficulty. Nay, *Christs* Resurrection argues the possibility of our Resurrection, and that with advantage. *Christ* underwent a cursed Death; Death was in its full strength when it seized upon him. If *Christ* brake through the Iron-Gate, clave the Rocks; sure then it is possible for us to rise, now the Gate of Life is set open to us, the Rock and Grave-stone roll'd away, and removed for us. Indeed *Christs* was a full death, so is not ours. *1 Thes. 4. 14.* *If we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, them which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* For whether is it easier to say, Awake thou that sleepest; or, Rise from the Dead? Dost thou doubt of thy Resurrection? Remember that *Jesus* was rais'd from the dead; and be not faithless, but faithful.

2. *Christs* Resurrection, 'tis a good ground of ours; 'tis *Exemplum Resurrectionis*, the exemplary cause of our Resurrection. *He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, Phil. 3. 21.* Neither *Lazarus*, nor the rest in Scripture, are exact patterns of our resurrection: They rose, to die again; they were rather bail'd, and repriev'd from the Grave for a time, not fully, discharged. *Lazarus* rose with his Grave-cloaths on him, still cloath'd with Mortality: *Christ* left the Grave-cloaths behind him, he is the example of our Resurrection. An example, is not a casual resemblance, but that which hath a similitude drawn from it by an intended imitation. So, only *Christs* Resurrection is the example of ours. Hence *S. Paul* saith, *We are planted into the similitude of his Resurrection, Rom. 6.* *Christs* Resurrection hath an assimilative virtue, draws our resurrection into the similitude of it self: As the Prophet *Elijah* applyed every member of his living body, to those of the dead Child, and so recovered him. 'Tis *Exemplum Resurrectionis*.

3. *Christs* Resurrection 'tis a good ground of ours; 'tis *Principium effectivum nostræ Resurrectionis*. *Vivo ego, & vos vivetis*; there is the derivation of our living again, *John 14. 19.* The Jews fondly say, there is something in *Spina dorsæ*, that doth not putrifie in our dead bodies, and that is the cause of our resurrection. No, 'tis not *Robur dorsæ*, but *Virtus Capitis*, the influence of our Head, *Christ*, that shall convey life to us. We are to look upon *Christs* Resurrection, as the Fountain and original of ours. He was *ἐξ ἡμῶν καὶ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*, saith *S. Basil*, *Christ* did not rise as a private person, for himself, but as a publick principle of all our resurrections. Hence he calls himself, *The Resurrection and the Life*. *S. Paul* calls him, *Primitias dormientium*: The First-fruits dedicate the whole Crop; so our Resurrection, 'tis dedicated by *Christ*, *Tertullian* calls our resurrection, *Appendices resurrectionis Dominicæ*. It was represented as on this day. When he rose, the Graves of many Saints were open'd, and they rose with him. As at Kings Coronations, when they receive the Crown, they enlarge Prisoners, dispense Honours, advance their Favourites. *Non tam Christus in carne nostra, quam caro nostra in Christo*. As *Joseph's* advancement, was the advancement and safety of all the Hebrews; and all the Jews were honour'd in the preferment of *Hester*; so all the body of the Church was raised in *Christ*. Indeed he entred the Grave as our Surety, and lay under the Arrest of Death for our Debt; that being discharged, he hath effected not so much his own, as our enlargement. That's the second, *Fundatio Resurrectionis*.

3. Here in this Profession of *Job's* is *Realitas Resurrectionis*; his Faith believes, and expects a true, real, substantial, bodily Resurrection. Nay, here is not only a reality, but an identity; he shall have a body, and the very same body;

1. He expects a true, real body: Not as some Hereticks, that turn'd this high Mystery into a moral Allegory; Why the Soul, by sinning, neither dies, nor sleeps, but is immortal, not capable of a Resurrection.

Thy

Serm. I.

Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they rise, saith the Prophet Esay, Chap. 16. 19.

2. And as there is a reality, so here is likewise a perfect identity : we shall receive the same bodies, not new bodies, created for us : *In my flesh shall I see God, these Eyes shall behold him.*

1. Else it were not a Resurrection ; *Quod cecidit, hoc resurgat ; quod mortuum est, reviviscat ;* saith the Father. And,

2. Justice and Equity would have it so, The body is partaker in sin, as well as the Soul. *Famula in culpa*, must be *Socia in pœna*, saith *Salvian*. If the Master mourns, the Servants that attend him, follows him in black : If the Soul, the principal in sin, if that suffers, the Body that's accessory, must share in the punishment.

3. The grand Pattern and Example of our Resurrection confirms it. *Christ* rose not only with a true body (*Feel me, a spirit hath not flesh and bones*) but with the same body. *Cicatrices Corporis*, were *Indices Resurrectionis*.

4. Mercy delights to have it so ; It will pour forth a redundant reward upon Soul and Body. God will not forget *the labour of love*, that the body hath undertaken. That flesh which thou hast chastised and mortified, those hands that have been lifted up in Prayer, reach'd out to the poor, employed in good works, those Eyes that have shed tears of repentance, *He shall wipe tears from those Eyes. Utique & isdem oculis, qui flebant, quique adhuc flerent, nisi indulgentia Divina siccaret.* Nay, not an hair of our heads shall perish. *Si sic custodiuntur supersua tua, in quanta securitate est Caro tua?* *S. Augustine.* This flesh, this body shall be raised, and glorified.

We have seen the first thing observable, the several Truths profess'd and acknowledged by *Job* in this Faith of the Resurrection. Now follows,

Secondly Pietas fidei ; the Motions, and Evidences of Piety his Faith expresses ;

1. Here is *Fortitudo fidei ;* here appears the great strength of his Faith, that foresees, and forecasts all the future difficulties and hindrances of his expectation, and overcomes them all, and is resolute against them. He considers Death, and the consequences of Death, rottenness, and corruption : Can a body, when it is wasted, and consumed in the Grave, ever rise again ? Yes, yes, saith *Job*, Nothing is impossible to an Omnipotent God, I know whom I have trusted, and he is able to effect it.

A weak Faith is glad to look off from these difficulties, and shrinks back at them : As *Martha*, considering *Lazarus* was four days dead, and began to putrify, her Faith began to fail her ; it was too late now to remove the Grave-stone. But Faith in its strength, considers all these, urges these impossibilities, and yet overcomes them : As *Elijah* in his dispute with *Baal's* Priests, took all the disadvantages to himself ; *Pour on water*, and again, *Pour on more water*, Faith shall fetch fire from Heaven to enflame the Sacrifice ; so, saith *Job*, Let me die, and rot, and putrify in the Grave, nay, let the fire burn my body, or the Sea swallow it, or wild Beasts devour it, yet it shall be restored to me ; Death shall be *prædesuæ custos*, like the Lion that kill'd the Prophet, and then stood by his Body, and did not consume it. *Job's* Faith laughs at impossibilities, is ashamed to talk of difficulties ; with *Abraham*, considers not his own dead body, but believes above, and against hope ; knew God would restore it.

2. A second print of piety, is *Alacritas fidei ;* the great alacrity and cheerfulness of his Faith, against present discouragements. See how cheerfully he views the horrid Face of Death, now seizing upon him ; looks upon his Ulcerous Body, the Skin consumed and eaten with Worms (*Tertullian* saith, he play'd with the Worms) he surveys all the ghastly appearances, and approaches of Death, confidently, comfortably, through this Faith of the Resurrection.

This blessed assurance makes him look Death in the Face undauntedly. Alas we ! how doth any appearance of Death affright us ? If we see but another man die

die, the cold sweat, and the pale Face, and the pangs of Death upon him, how doth it dismay us? *Job* finds all these in himself, and speaks comfortably of them. 'Tis St. *Augustin's* pious counsel, *Si times mortem, ama resurrectionem*; If thou beest afraid of death, acquaint thy self with the hope of the Resurrection. If a man go to prison, and be able to say, I know I shall be bayled, I have one who will quit my debt, and enlarge me, such an one fears not the Prison. Let death arrest us, *Christ* shall enlarge us. *We are Prisoners of hope*; *Zech. 9.* How cheerfully did *Jacob* take his journey, when God spake to him, *Gen. 46.* *Fear not to go down into Egypt. I will go down with thee, and I will surely bring thee up again.* This hope made *Job*, not only not to fear death, but even to desire it; Chap. 14. *Oh that thou wouldest hide me in the Grave*; then he asks this question; *If a man die, shall he live again?* Yes, saith he, *Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee, thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.* That's the second. *Alacritas fidei.*

3. There is yet another print of Piety, *Sauva expectatio Fidei*. What is the thing his Faith longs for at the Resurrection? It is the seeing of his Saviour, the beholding of God, the enjoying of his Redeemer. *In my flesh shall I see God, and mine eyes shall behold him*, 'Tis that, that makes the Resurrection comfortable; not that we shall live ever, but be ever with the Lord. It was small joy for *Absalom* to dwell at *Jerusalem*, and not be admitted to see the Kings face, *2 Sam. 14.* Heaven is not Heaven, but a place of confinement, without this glorious and blessed Vision. Though *Moses*, and *Elias* vanish on Mount *Tabor*, yet to see *Christ* in glory, is abundant happiness. *Do occidere heliace*; the glory of the Sun swallows up the glory of the lesser Stars. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and whom do I desire in comparison of thee?* *Psal. 73.* The good women at the Sepulchre this Day saw a Vision of Angels, but that contented them not, till *Christ* himself appeared. *Job* knew he should enjoy the society of Saints, and Angels, sit down, and feast it with *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of Heaven; but here is the height of his happiness; *I shall see my Saviour.* Heaven; as it is *Cenaculum sponsi*, the Guest-chamber for the supper of the Lamb, 'tis a place of comfort; but, as it is *Thalamus sponsi*, the Bride-chamber of the Lamb, where the Spouse enjoys him whom her soul loves, it is the place of blessedness.

Thirdly, the last thing remains, that's *Beneficium fidei*, the use and benefit *Job* make to himself of this Meditation. And the benefit is threefold, suitable, and seasonable to a threefold condition in which *Job* now was.

1. *Job* was overlaid, and oppressed with affliction. Suitable to this condition, this Meditation affords, *Vim sustentativam*; it supports his Spirits amidst all his afflictions. Here is the patience, of the Saints; mocking, and scourgings, and bonds, and imprisonments, they endured them all, because they expected a better resurrection, *Heb. 11.* That blessed day will make amends for all. It was this hope that sustained *S. Paul*, kept him from fainting, *2 Cor. 4.* *Knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also with Jesus—and for this cause we faint not.* Thus also he comforts, and cheers up other Christians. *If in this life only, we had hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable*; But there is a Resurrection, after this life we have hope in *Christ*, and therefore of all men most happy. This assurance will stand by us, when all things else fail. It was *Esau's* confession, Behold, *I am at the point to die, and what profit, shall this birthright do to me?* But, to be *Filius Resurrectionis*, that Birthright will relieve us at our last agony, and support us comfortably. *Job* felt the good of this Meditation, and he insists upon it; Here is *Masticatio fidei*, he chews it in his Mouth, and sucks out the sweetness of it.

2. You may see *Job* in another condition, transported with passion, and suitable to that, this Meditation it had *Vim quietativam*; a great virtue he found in it, to settle, and compose him. In the Verses going before, his spirit is stirred within him, he is full of complainings and murmurings, and quarrellings with God, and expostulations; See how he rebukes, and allays these Storms and Tempests with this Meditation; *O my soul, keep silence unto God, for of him comes my salvation.* Thus *David* stills discontents, *Why art thou so troubled, O my soul? Why art thou so disquieted*

Serm. I. *eted within me? I shall yet praise him.* The day shall come, that I shall see his countenance, and for ever enjoy him. *Mortale mori*, is one ground of settlement against these perplexities, and *Job* makes use of it, *Chap. 14.* but, *Mortuum reviviscere*, is satisfaction with advantage; that will calm, and quiet all his complainings.

3. Lastly, behold *Job* in another condition; he is charged by his friends, with the sin of hypocrisie; and then this Meditation, it hath *Vim apologeticam*, 'tis his defence and apologie against that accusation. Against all their surmises and suspicions of his integrity; this he opposes for his justification; *It is God that justifies me, who are ye that condemn me?* 'Tis *Christ*, that is dead, and now risen again, he shall judge and acquit me. O! hypocrisie shrinks at the thought of death, trembles to hear of a Resurrection. These painted Sepulchres till then, make a goodly shew; they are the beautifullest parts that are in the Church; but when the Vault shall be open'd, and all secrets disclosed; nothing will appear then, but horror and confusion, rottenness and corruption. But truth and integrity appeals unto that great Trial; knows that the Name that's written in Heaven shall one day be cleared from slanders on earth. *My witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high.* That's the great avowment of *Job's* truth, and integrity; till then it matters not much what the World says of us. *Lingua Petiliani non est ventilabrum Christi*; there lies an appeal of all mens censures, to that days trial, before the great Tribunal.

A joyful appearance before which, He grant unto us, who at this Day overcame death for us, and opened unto us the Gate of Eternal life, even Jesus, that hath delivered us from the wrath to come. To whom, with the Father, &c.

ON EASTER-DAY.

The Second Sermon.

Rom. viii. 11.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead; dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodys by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.



IN this Context and passage of Scripture, the Apostle discourses the state and condition of a Christian. And having in the former part of this Epistle settled the truth of our Justification by the Death of Christ, now he lays down grounds of comfort against those infirmities, and imperfections, that Christians find and feel themselves to be subject to.

1. He discovers these infirmities, Chap. 7. *I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing. Odi quod sum, non sum quod amo. August. Epist. 106. The good that I would, I do not; the evil which I would not do, that do I.* 'Tis that which St. Augustine calls, *Rixa & jurgium, inter carnem, & spiritum*; Hannah and Peninnah under the same Roof, vexing each other; the one provoking, the other weeping, both disquieting the peace of the Soul. And he who is Spiritual like St. Paul, will heed and observe them, have his eye upon his thoughts and inward inclinations. The Naturalists say, that Man hath two Muscles in his Eyes more than other Creatures, that make him look upward. A Christian hath two more, to make him look inward, to search and discern the stirrings of his heart.

2. As he discovers them, so he bewails and mourns for them. *καταπαύω; ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* See the spirit of St. Paul; he rejoices in afflictions, but he mourns for corruptions. Verse 35. *Quis separabit?* He defies afflictions, the greatest of them: But Chap. 7. 24. he hath another exclamation, *Quis liberabit?* He groans under infirmities and corruptions, the least of them. Ey, here is the true mark of a Spiritual man; he chuseth affliction rather than iniquity. Affliction sits light, but sin sits heavy on him. *Tu nosti gemitus cordis mei, de hac re, & flumina oculorum meorum,* saith St. Augustine, bewailing but one of his infirmities.

3. He finds, and lays hold upon help against them. Faith represents Christ, and his power ready to succour and deliver him; *I thank God, through Jesus Christ my Lord.* These infirmities fetch'd tears from S. Paul, but yet he doth not weep out the Eye of Faith; looks up to Christ, as to his sovereign Antidote, to cure and recover him. And then,

4. He comforts himself against those many evils, that are consequent fruits arising from these infirmities. There are three main evils that arise from them;

1. These sinful infirmities, in themselves, have a condemning power in them; they deserve, in justice, no less then the curse of God, and eternal damnation. Papists, and others may sleight these first motions, and count them no sins; S. Paul judges them damnable. Sin is so strong a poyson, that the least grain

Serm. II. is deadly; and the Gospel doth not make them no sins, but makes them pardonable, (As God destroyed not the fiery Serpents, but provided a cure and remedy against them) in themselves damnable. Against this evil consequent, S. Paul finds a Consolation, *v. 1.* *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*; that State and Condition brings with it Pardon and Absolution.

2. A second evil consequent from these infirmities, is, that Thralldom, and Captivity, and Vexation, which these remainders of sin bring upon the soul of a Christian. Though he hath his pardon, yet his shackles and his bolts are still upon him. Though he be freed from the condemning power of these infirmities; yet still he suffers encumbrance and vexation from them.

It is matter of great heaviness to the Saints, that they are thus hindred and encumbred; that they find such strivings and rebellions in themselves against the Law of God; that the flesh should resist and oppress the spirit; that *Hagar* should insult over *Sarah*; the bond-woman over the free; that *Ismael* should over-top *Isaac*; that *Esau*, in the womb of grace, should struggle with *Jacob*; that the house of *Saul* should still be quarreling with the house of *David*. But against this, he comforts himself and others; *The Law of the Spirit hath made us free from the law of sin*; — *ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit*, verse 9.

3. A third evil is, that these infirmities, and remainders of sin, have a malignant power to make us subject to the law death. Their very being in a Christian, is the seed and original of mortality.

1. Though sin be pardon'd by the death of *Christ*;

2. Though the dominion and power of it be broken and subdued by the Spirit of *Christ*; yet,

3. As long as it remains in us in the least and lowest degree, it makes us subject to the power of death.

Yet against this S. Paul finds a double comfort:

1. This subjection to death is not total, 'tis but half a death; the death of the body only. That, indeed, we are obnoxious to; but the Soul hath escaped free from the snares of Death. *The body indeed is dead* (that is, subject to death) *because of sin*; but the Spirit, that is life, because of righteousness, *vers. 10.* Our chiefest and best part, the proper seat of misery, or happiness, that's put into a state of spiritual and glorious immortality. *Fear not that, that kills the body and can do no more*; It is not a total death.

2. Even this bodily death to be undergone, 'tis not perpetual; that's a second comfort. It hath a limit of time set to it. Death shall not always gnaw upon us in the Grave. *The righteous shall have Dominion over Death in the Morning*. Our bodys, in the holds of Death, are Prisoners of Hope; there will be enlargement; Death shall be swallowed up, and abolish'd; the Power and Spirit of God shall free these mortal bodys, bring us, like *Peter*, asleep out of the Dungeon, *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you*.

The Text then, 'tis the blessed Assurance, and Evidence of a Christians happy Resurrection. In it observe these four particulars:

1. Is the Condition, upon which is promised, and we may expect it; *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you*.

2. Is the main Cause and Efficient of this our Resurrection; 'Tis he who raised up *Christ* from the dead.

3. Is the Acting and Performing of it; *He shall quicken your mortal bodys*.

4. Is the Ground and Reason of it; *Because his spirit dwells in you*.

First, For the Condition, *If*, I call it a Condition, and yet it carries a three-fold force in it:

I. It hath the force of a Connexion; it makes a Connexion with the former privileges and comforts of a Christian:

1. No condemnation for sin, *vers. 1.* that's one comfort.

2. No dominion, nor power, absolute sway of sin; that's a second comfort.

3. No

3. No total, nor final, nor utter destruction by sin; Death is abolish'd; *Serm. II.*
that's a third comfort.

It shews us a blessed concatenation, and link of a Christians privileges. Mercy, it begins in Pardon, and grows, and diffuses it self in Grace, and never gives over till it hath placed us in Glory.

1. Here is the fat Calf kill'd for us; the holy Lamb of God redeeming us from condemnation.

2. Here is the Ring put upon our finger, the Seal and Pledge of his Spirit; and,

3. Here is the choice Robe of Glory and Immortality, that we are invested with. 'Tis a Connexion.

II. It hath the use and force of an Illation; *But if*, He deduces and proves our Resurrection out of former antecedent principles, and privileges, The raising and glorifying of our bodys, 'tis an Appendix, and deduction from some other things. Our Resurrection is not so much a principle, as a conclusion of Faith; and it must be inferred, not by an *Enthymeme*, but by a *Sorites*; it hangs not upon one principle, but upon many; Not conclude, *Præcivit, ergo glorificavit*; but, He hath redeemed, he hath called, he hath mortified, and sanctified, therefore he will raise us, and at last glorify us. These assurances are not immediate, and clear in themselves, but are contained in their causes. We must not presently affirm, I shall be saved, my body shall be raised; but it must be lawfully concluded, out of warrantable grounds; If I be justified, If I be sanctified, If the Spirit of God dwell in me; make sure of these, these are Evidences, and Arguments, and Pledges of our Resurrection. That's second; it hath the force of an Illation.

III. It hath the force of a Caution, and necessary Proviso. And so it makes our Resurrection conditional. But how can that be?

1. Our Resurrection, 'tis absolute and necessary, *ex exigentia Justitiæ*; 'tis appointed for all men to come to Judgment, *Heb. 9.* The Resurrection shall bring the Prisoners from the Gaol to the Bar. True, and yet it is conditional. That there shall be a Resurrection, 'tis grounded on Gods Justice; but the Resurrection to Life, that's capable of a limitation, and condition; *If I may attain to the Resurrection of the dead*, saith St. Paul, *Phil. 3. 11.* That there shall be an Assizes, and Gaol-delivery, is settled by Law; but how the Prisoner shall speed, whether pardon'd, or condemned, there is hazard in that. On Pharaoh's Birth-day, both Butler and Baker shall come out of Prison, but whether to Advancement, or Execution, is not so certain. Burthen,

2. This Resurrection to Life hath a certainty in it; Gods purpose hath determin'd it, *Christs* merits have purchased it. True, and yet it is conditional. Not any promise, or mercy on Gods part, but supposes, and requires conditions on ours. We cannot immediately from Gods purpose, or *Christs* merits, leap into Heaven; but there are pre-requisite conditions, and subordinate means for our actual fruition. *I strive, if by any means I may attain to the Resurrection*, *Phil. 3.* The Ladder to Heaven hath many Staffs, and Steps, and Degrees; many Isss, and Conditions to be observed.

3. Our Resurrection, 'tis *Articulus Fidei*, a fundamental Article of our Faith, and yet limited with an *If*. Though in it self, never so infallible, yet a personal, and comfortable apprehension for our selves, depends on condition. Let our Resurrection be never so certain in it self, yet *extra studium Sanctitatis*, 'tis not certain to us. *Without Holiness, no man shall see God*, *Heb. 12.* *He that hath this Hope, purifies himself, as he is pure*, *1 Joh. 3.*

So then, for conceiving this condition, we will take of it a double Consideration:

1. Let us consider it in the several Particulars.

2. Then in the Summary drift, and purpose of it.

I. Take it asunder into particulars; *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you.* Here we have a description of the Holy Ghost, by a three-fold Reference.

Serm. II.

1. In Reference to God the Father ; so he is called *The Spirit of Him* ; that is of God the Father. The *Holy Ghost*, is the Spirit of the Father.

2. The *Holy Ghost* is described in reference to *Christ* ; as it was the Spirit of the Father, raising *Christ* from the dead.

3. He is described in reference to us, by a gracious habitude, and relation to us ; he is said to dwell in us.

1. Here is a blessed relation ; he is the Spirit of the Father.

2. Here is a glorious operation, *He raised up Jesus from the dead.*

3. Here is a gracious Possession, *He dwelleth in us.*

1st. Look upon the first Reference ; the *Holy Ghost* is here called, *The Spirit of the Father*. These relations in the sacred Trinity, are incomprehensible : *He dwells in the thick darkness. Sanctius & reverentius hac creduntur, quam discuntur.* 'Tis safer to meditate on the gracious relations of God to us, than of those mysterious relations within himself. The light in the Air is easier seen than the body of the Sun. Briefly therefore, the *Holy Ghost*, is both the Spirit of the Father, and of the Son ; proceeds alike from both of them. The denial of this truth, by the Greek Church, caused that great Schism 'twixt the Eastern and Western Churches ; and (if we will believe *Bedarmine*) this error was remarkably punished by God ; the City of *Constantinople*, being, on the Feast-day, dedicated to the *Holy Ghost*, sackt and overthrown.

However, the Christian faith acknowledges the *Holy Ghost* to be, the Spirit of the Father, and the Spirit of the Son.

Sometimes he is the Spirit of the Father, *John 15. 16. He is called the Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father. Luke 24. 19. The same Spirit is called The Promise of the Father ; Both in procession and in mission ; his being, and his sending come both from the Father.*

Again, sometimes he is called (and that in truth and propriety of speech) the Spirit of the Son, *Rom. 8. 9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Gal. 4. 6. God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts. As the Spirit is the promise of the Father, so likewise he is the promise of the Son, John 16. He promised to send them the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. This procession from the Son, was sweetly, and aptly represented by that outward Sign and Ceremony, which Christ used in giving the Holy Ghost, John 20. 22. He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive the Holy Ghost. Spirato, 'tis ab intra, it shewed the Spirit proceeded from him. The Apostles, they gave the Holy Ghost, but not Spirando, it proceeded not from them. Christ gave it *adventitius*, they gave it *ministerialis*, as St. Basil speaks ; he by authority, they ministerially. St. Paul expresses it, *Gal. 3. 5. They ministered to them the Spirit.**

The *Holy Ghost* then, being the Spirit of the Son, as well as of the Father, why then is he here called the Spirit of the Father.

1. *Quia pater, fons Deitatis*, the Father is the Fountain, and Original of the Deity, and doth communicate it, both to the Son, and to the Spirit. Hence Divines compare the Father to the Fountain from whence the Water springs ; the Son to the River and Stream that floweth from this Fountain ; the *Holy Ghost*, to the Pool, or Sea, into which both Fountain, and River doth run and flow. All one in the substance, yet distinctly apprehended by these resemblances.

2. Saint Paul here names the *Holy Ghost*, under this expression, *The Spirit of the Father*, as delighting to shew the consent, and concurrence of the whole Trinity in the work and carriage of our salvation. The Father, Son, Spirit, all joyned in this great Work. As in our creation, *Let us make* ; so in our repair, and recovery, the power of the Father, the wisdom of the Son, the grace of the *Holy Ghost*, all concurred in this work. Thus *Ephes. 2. 18. Through the Son, we have access by one Spirit to the Father. The Son* recommends us, the Spirit conducts us, and the Father receives us. The gods of the Heathen, when one favoured, another opposed ;

Mulcher in Trojam, pro Troja stat Apollo.

One was against *Troy*, the other stood for it. Our God, *Father, Son, and Holy Serm. II.*
Ghost, all set themselves to achieve our salvation.

3. By this expression, the Apostle would send us to the Well-head of all Grace, and teach us to whom to seek for the gift of the Spirit, the original donor of it is God the Father. Hence, He is called, *The promise of the Father, Act. 1. 4.* We had need be set right in this point. *S. James* tells us, we are subject to mistake; *Err not my dear Children; every good and perfect gift comes from above, from the Father of lights, James 1. 16. Lux a primo lucido.* Our Saviour appropriates it to the Father, *Luk. 11. 11. Your Heavenly Father shall give the Holy Ghost to them that ask him.* He hath abundance of Spirit, as *Malachi* speaks. In all those diversities of endowments and operations that are in the Church, 'tis the same God that works all in all. It must teach us to whom to have recourse, even to this Fountain of holiness from whom it is communicated and conveyed to all that receive it. That's the first Reference; 'tis the *Spirit of the Father.*

2. Then here is a second Reference to *Christ*, in a miraculous operation; *The Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead.* God the Father, he raised *Christ*, by the Spirit from the dead. The point is observable; that the resurrection of *Christ*, is in a special manner attributed to the Father, *Acts 2. 32. This Jesus hath God raised up, and is by the right hand of God exalted; and Acts 3. 26. God hath raised up his Son Jesus.*

Indeed, we find the Resurrection ascribed to all the three Persons;

1. The Father, he raised him up; *Him God raised up the third day, Acts 10. 40.*
2. *Christ*, he is the Author of his own Resurrection; his Divinity was inseparably joyned to his humanity; united not only to his living, but also to his dead body; and by virtue of that Union, he raised himself; *He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again, Joh. 10. 18.* As the Sun sets, and rises by his own motion.
3. The Holy Ghost raised up *Christ*, *1 Pet. 3. 18. He was put to death in the flesh, but was quickned by the Spirit.*

So then all concur; yet here it is especially attributed to the Father, for divers reasons;

1. In general, all actions of the Deity, originally, flow from the Father; As in being, so in all acting, and working, he is the first in order. Hence it is that *Christ* ascribes all that he doth to his Father, *Joh. 5. 19. The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do; for whatsoever things he doth, these also doth the Son likewise. The Father, saith Christ, gave him those works to do.*

2. The Father is said to raise *Christ* from the dead, because the Father in a special manner is the Fountain of Life: As the Son is made known by the Attribute of Wisdom; the Holy Ghost by the Attribute of Love; so the Father is represented by the Attribute of Life. *Christ* calls him, *The living Father, Joh. 6. 57. 'Tis his glorious Title, The living God.* It was *S. Peter's* Confession, *Thou art the Son of the living God.* And this life, the Father communicates to the Son, *Joh. 5. 26. As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son, to have life in himself.* This *Paul* makes an act of Gods Paternity to raise *Christ*. His Resurrection was a second Generation, *Acts 13. 33. Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross; Why? it is as good, If thou be the Son of God, rise up from the Grave.*

3. The Father is here said to raise up *Christ*. His Resurrection being the first step of his glorious Exaltation; it is ascribed to the Father, rather than to himself, desirous rather his Father should put the Garland of triumph upon his head, than he himself assume it. Thus the Scripture ascribes his Humiliation to himself, his Exaltation to his Father, *Phil. 2. 7. He made himself of no reputation, he took upon him the form of a servant, he humbled himself, and became obedient; wherefore God highly exalted him. Usurping Adonijah, steps of himself into his Fathers Throne. This is our ambition; upon the work, but snatch the reward. Solomon will be placed by his Father, anointed, and advanced to the Throne by*

Dauids

Serm 11. *David's* appointment. *He that humbles himself shall be exalted*; active in his humiliation, passive in his exaltation. Thus *Christ*, though he had power and authority to exalt himself; it had been no robbery, *S. Paul* tells us: yet he observes this gracious Oeconomy, makes his Father the approver of his Obedience, the Acceptor of his Merits, the Rewarder of his Passion, the Author of his Exaltation.

4. The Father is said to raise up *Christ*, purposely as a ground of hope, and assurance to us, of our Resurrection. For us to hear that *Christ* is risen by his own immediate Power; weakness of faith will object, *Christ* was God too; his Deity was united to his dead body, it was easie for him to take up his life; but we are nothing in our Graves, but weakness and corruption. True, but this Scripture ministers more comfort; it tells us, that *Christ's* Resurrection was perform'd by the Power and Spirit of the Father; God reached out his hand to him, and rais'd him up. Here then is our comfort; the same Spirit of God is communicable to us, the same Arm of Power may be reached out to us. Look not upon thy weakness, but look upon Gods strength. He will employ the same Power for us, which he did for *Christ*, *Ephes. 1. 19.* He will use the same exceeding great Power to us-ward that believe, which he wrought in *Christ*, when he raised him from the dead.

That's the second Reference.

3. Now follows the third gracious Relation, and that is of the Spirit to us; that is a Reference of Inhabitation; *He dwells in us*: A speech of great Emphasis, importing the near, and close, and intimate conjunction, and union, 'twixt the Spirit, and us:

And this inhabitation is expressed in Scripture in a double Notion:

1. It is *Domestica, & familiaris habitatio*; 'tis *Habitatio ut in domo*; that is a near conjunction. Thus the Church is called, *The House of the living God*, *1 Tim. 3. 15.* And, *Heb. 3. 6.* *Whose House are we?* And again, *Ephes. 2. 22.* *We are built for an habitation of God, through the Spirit.*

2. It is *Sacra & Religiosa*; 'tis *Habitatio ut in Templo*; that's more.

The first, *In Domo*, imports a near Conjunction.

The second, *In Templo*, infers a sacred Presence.

Indeed, Gods Presence makes us a Temple, sanctifies, and consecrates us to holy Uses. *1 Cor. 3. 16.* *Know you not that you are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?* Nay, not only our Souls, but our Bodies are hallowed to be a Temple. *1 Cor. 6. 19.* *Know you not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost?*

For the understanding of this sacred Inhabitation, let us consider,

1. How the Spirit dwells in us.

2. What this dwelling implies.

1. How doth the Spirit dwell in us?

1. This dwelling of the Spirit in us, 'tis like the Spirit itself, wholly spiritual, all in a mystical and heavenly manner. As is his Essence, so is his Presence only spiritual. Papists enforce a bodily Presence of *Christ*; we must corporally receive him into our bodies. No, saith *S. Cyprian*, *Nostre, & Christi conjunctio, non miscet personas, nec unit substantias; affectus consociat, & confederat voluntates.* *1 Cor. 6. 17.*

2. This habitation is performed in us by the production, and infusion of those saving Graces, which the Spirit works in us. As *Luther* speaks of the Soul, 'tis *Officina Dei mihi*; 'tis the Work-house, where the *Holy Ghost* frames, and fashions the new Man in us. And though he dwells in us by every Grace, yet there are two special Graces, to which the Scripture ascribes the Inhabiting:

1. Is Faith; that's the Grace that lets in God into the soul, and gives him possession. *Ephes. 3. 17.* *He dwells in our hearts by Faith.* Infidelity and unbelief excludes him; faith receives and entertains him.

2. Is Charity; by it the Spirit dwells in us. *God is love, and he that dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him, 1 John 4. 16.* Love, amongst

amongst men, it is a cohabiting quality. *Armor congregat*; 'tis an associating virtue; 'tis the glew and cement of the World; it makes men dwell together. These two are the two uniting Graces, Faith, unites to God mystically; Love, morally. 'Tis the formal Union of the Soul with God. Serm. II.

3. The Spirit dwells in us, not only by his gifts and graces, but really. The *Holy Ghost* is present and applies, and unites himself to a Christian. Our bodies are the *Temples of the Holy Ghost*, not of his Graces, but of his own sacred Person. The Fathers prove the *Holy Ghost* to be the true God in Substance, because he hath a Temple. None but God possesses a Temple. And, *Habitatio*, 'tis *Actus Personæ*; properly, none but a person is said to Inhabit. Indeed, Substantially, the *Holy Ghost* is everywhere; but yet Dwelling, adds to his natural Presence, a more special Habitude: He is *tanquam in suo*, where he doth Inhabit. A stranger may be present in an House, as well as the Owner; but to be there by special Interest, as in his own Possession, so the *Holy Ghost* is present in a Christian.

That's the first Consideration, How the Spirit dwells in us. But,

II. What doth his Dwelling imply?

1. Dwelling implys Propriety, and special Right and Interest. It is a Possessive word. The Soul, and Body of a Christian, is Gods more immediate Possession; he hath the reference of a Lord, and Owner to it. Thus St. Paul tells us, 1 Cor. 6. 19. *Ye are the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and ye are not your own.* A Christian is Gods upon a fuller right and title, than another mans. All are his; as all waists are the Lord's of the Soil; but his Lordship, and Mansion-House, are more specially his. Such a reference hath a Christian to God: He is his, not upon common tenure, but by peculiar appropriation.

2. Dwelling implys Residency, and Continuance, and Fixedness of abode. A man is not said to dwell in an In, or in the House of a Friend, though he be sometimes in them. *A stranger*, or a *Wayfaring-man*, saith the Prophet *Jeremy*, turns aside, to tarry for a night. There a man dwells where he resides, and abides constantly. So then, the Spirit dwells in a Christian; that is, he is constantly, fixed in him, sets up his by rest, makes him his Mansion; *Here will I dwell, for I have a delight in it.* Thus David expresses Gods residence in his Church, *Psal. 132. 13: The Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation, vers. 14. This is my rest for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.*

Thus the Spirit fixes his abode inseparably to the soul of a sanctified man. His Graces have,

1. *Firmitatem radicis*, they take root in us.

2. *Perennitatem fontis*, they are always springing, never decaying. *The Anointing which you have received of him, abides in you, 1 Joh. 2.*

27. His Grace, 'tis laid in Oyl; no waterish colours, that will wash off presently. Indeed for his *habitation*, some such endowments, they are in a man, *Per modum actus transcuntis*, as Prophecy; but Saving Graces, are *Per modum habitus permanentis*. According to some Graces, the Spirit comes and goes, saith St. Gregory; *Recessurus venit, & venturus recedit; sed sine quibus ad vitam eternam non pervenitur, in electorum cordibus semper permanet*; Saving Graces are never vanishing. That is a second residency.

3. Dwelling implys Command and Authority, and right of Disposal of all things. He who dwells and possesses as an owner, doth like the Centurian; he saith to this, *Do, and he doth it; to another, Go, and he goes.* It was the Law of the *Medes and Persians*, *That every man should bear rule in his own house, Esther 1. 22.* So then, doth the Spirit of God dwell in us? He must bear sway in us with all authority; he must rule, and govern, and order all in the Soul of a Christian. His motions, they must be commands. 'Tis a rule in Oeconomics, *Voluntas Superioris quomodo cunque innotescit, vim præcepti obtinet.* The Master of the house, the glance of his Eye, the beck of his Hand, must find obedience. 'Tis that which Paul practiseth, *Gal. 2. 20. I live, yet not I, but Christ lives*

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lives in me. Christ, and his Spirit bore all the sway in St. Paul's life. Christians must be *καταδουλωμένοι τῷ πνεύματι*, acted, and managed all by the Spirit. St. Paul expresses it, *Acts. 20. 22. δεδουλωμένος τῷ πνεύματι*, bound in the Spirit; carried by a strong guidance of the Holy Ghost in all his conversation. Hath he vouchsafed to dwell in thee? Yield up thy self to his command and authority.

4. Dwelling implies Care, and Protection, and Provision. All that are within the Verge, are under Protection. The Master of the house is to see all, and to provide for them. The good man of the house wakes soonest, and watches longest. *Aristotle* gives this rule in his *Oeconomicks*; *ἐν εἰρηδαι καὶ περὶ πρῶτον δεονότατον ἐκείνου, καὶ καθεύδειν ὕστερον*. The care of his house belongs to him. Nor is this Spirit of Christ wanting in this property. A Christian, possess'd by God, hath a Parent of Protection, a full supply of all comfortable provision. He will safe-guard his house, and protect it; he withstands all assaults made upon it. *Φυλακτικὸς*, must be *ἀντιστατικὸς*; he resists the assaults that Satan makes upon it. *He that destroys the Temple of God, him shall God destroy*. See the Patent of Provision that God grants to his household; *My servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed, Isai. 65. 13.*

For use;

1. It should teach us gladly to yield up our selves as Mansions for him to dwell and abide in us; not only to receive him guest-wise, or at some good time only, as at a Communion; but resign up all to him; give him the Keys, let no Room be shut up against him. Invite him to come in to us, to own and possess us; *Turn in, my Lord, turn in to me.*

2. When he hath taken up his dwelling, offend him not by any thing that may make him dislike, much less give over and forsake his dwelling. *Res delicata est Spiritus Dei. Tertul.* 'Tis not every rude and homely entertainment that will content him. *Nobilem hospitatem habes, O anima.* O man, thou lodgest a glorious Inhabitant, study to please him. *We must not grieve him, Eph. 4. 30.* much less resist him, *Acts 7.* least of all despise him, *Heb. 10. 29.* He will abide no longer than where he is observed. As the Spirit of man stays no longer in the body, than it is pliant to him; hinder it from working, and it forsakes us presently.

3. This Inhabitation of the Spirit in us, challenges a reverence of the Souls and Bodys of Gods Saints, as of the Mansion-place, where God himself abides. Violence to a Temple, 'tis counted Sacrilege; such a Prophanation, is no less than an Abomination to God. Neither scorn, nor cruelty, nor any unworthy usage to these Temples of the living God, but strikes at the Face of God himself. *Do you despise the house of God?* saith St. Paul. As Christ saith, *He that swears by the Temple, swears by it, and him that dwells in it;* so he that violates the body of a Saint, offers indignity to that God that dwells in it. Take heed of profaning your selves, being dedicated and devoted to the Holy Ghost. Thus S. Paul dehorts them from uncleanness; *The body is not for fornication, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. Portastis Dominum in corpore vestro*, as the old Translation hath it. Possess them in Holiness and Honour.

We have seen the particulars; Now,

II. Briefly take notice of the summary intent and purpose of this Clause, *If the Spirit of him that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised Jesus from the dead, shall quicken your mortal bodies.*

The Exigence, and Illation from this Conditional, is thus much; That Sanctification is a necessary Requisite to a glorious Resurrection. The expectation of future Glory, it must be founded upon present Grace. *Thou wilt not give thine holy One to see corruption* saith David, *Psal. 16. Solum Sanctum non videbis corruptionem*, saith St. Bern. 'Tis holiness that enbalsms our dead bodies, and will keep them from corruption.

The many habitudes and references that Holiness hath to Happiness, Grace to Glory, will confirm this truth.

1. Grace in reference to Glory, it hath *Rationem seminis*. Everlasting life

life, it is called *the fruit of holiness*, Rom. 6. 22. and Galat. 6. 8. *He that sows to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* *Sementis hodie, & cras messis*, saith St. Chrysostom. This life is the Seed-time, the next life is the Harvest. If their be no Seed-time of Grace, never expect any Harvest of Glory.

2. Grace unto Glory, hath the respect of a First-fruits to the whole Crop, Rom. 8. 23. *We that have the first-fruits of the Spirit, wait for the redemption of our bodies.* The First-fruits dedicated the whole Harvest. These ripe Ears of Grace, are a blessed assurance of the full Sheaves of Glory to be reaped hereafter.

3. Grace unto Glory, hath the respect of a Fountain to a Stream, or River, Job. 4. 14. *The water that I shall give him, shall be in him, a well of water springing up to everlasting life.* And what that Well of Water is, he tells us, Chap. 7. 39. *This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him, should receive.* Damm, or dry up the Spring-head, and the Streams flow not: we must begin at the Fountain of Grace, if ever we mean to attain to the Ocean of Glory.

4. Grace unto Glory, hath the respect of a pledge or earnest, or seal unto a full actual Possession, 2 Cor. 1. 2. *Who hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts:* And again, Eph. 1. 13. *Ye are sealed with that holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance,* Ἀρπαζόν, μέγας δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ ὑπερ τὸ πνεῦμα, &c. saith S. Chrysost. It seals up all, and is instead of all. Theodosius made it a Law, that they who received not the pledge of Matrimony, should lose their Dowry. Without this earnest of Grace, we cannot expect the fruition of Glory. 'Tis like the red thread on Rahab's house; if we part with that token, we cannot escape.

5. Indeed there is so near a Conjunction, twixt Grace and Glory, that the Scripture makes them both the same thing. St. Peter calls Grace, *The Spirit of Glory*; *The Spirit of God, and of Glory rests on you*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. They differ but in degrees; as the Morning-light doth, to the light of the perfect day, Prov. 4. 18. Grace, 'tis the beginning and day-break, and dawning of Glory, ἀνύστασις ὁρῆς, as there is some light before the Sun rises. Glory, 'tis nothing but *gratia consummata*; and the blessedness of Heaven, 'tis *gloriosa sanctitas*, holiness in the brightest hue, shining in its full lustre.

This makes the Scripture urge and enforce the necessity of Holiness, *Follow holiness, without which none shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. &c.

We have done with the first particular, The condition upon which our Resurrection is promised; *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you:* Now follows,

Secondly, The efficient cause of it; *He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall quicken your mortal bodies*; That is God the Father, he will be the Author of our Resurrection.

Divers Reasons and Congruities, there are for this truth.

1. The first Founder of life, must be the repairer and Restorer of it to us: As he first breathed life into us; so he will send forth his Spirit and renew us, and recal us back again. The interest he hath in us by our Creation, gives him the right to atchive our Resurrection. Job observed that, Chap. 14. 14, 15. *If a man die shall he live again? Yes, yes, Thou shalt call and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.* That hand which created us, shall again raise and restore us. *Mine own I will bring back again*, Psal. 68. 22.

2. The soul in death, returns to him that gave it. It is in his hand, and power, and custody, and so none but he can return it into the body, and re-unite it. Dives in Hell confessed this truth; *Father Abraham, send Lazarus to my Brethren.* He hath the *Keys of Hell, and of death*, and of all the Chambers of the grave, Rev. 1. 18.

3. He is the Restorer of life, in the Resurrection, as being the supreme Disposer of all Rewards, and Honours, and Retributions. As the King is the Fountain of all civil Dignity, and Honour, and he must dispence it; so all the Dispensations of Glory, are at his disposal. The Preferments in Heaven, are given to them for whom they are prepared, by the Father, Matth. 20. 23.

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Now this Author of our Resurrection is specified, not barely by the mention of his name, or person, but represented under an expression of much hope, and assurance; *He that raised Christ from the dead*, that gives footing and fastning to our Faith, that he will raise us also. That great work makes our Resurrection possible, and hopeful, and certain too.

There are many *Prælia Resurrectionis*; many miraculous works in Scripture, that did sweetly prefigure our Resurrection, but none like this of raising *Christ*.

1. *Enoch's Translation*, that he saw not death, *Gen. 5. 24.* God delivered him from the power and possession of death. That which was to him *Gratia præveniens*, shall be to us *Gratia subveniens*. He who exempted him from death, can rescue us.

2. *Elijah's Rapture*, and assumption in a fiery Chariot; he likewise was exempted from the necessity of death; his exaltation was a type of our Resurrection.

3. *Aaron's Rod*, a dry, dead piece of Wood; made to bud, and flourish, and bring forth ripe Fruit: that argues a possibility that we shall revive, and renew our strength again.

4. The Garments of the Israelites for forty years, though used, and worn yet decayed not. He who can preserve our Garments from wearing out, sure he can preserve our Bodies from perishing.

5. The three Children cast into a fiery Furnace, yet preserved; no smell of fire upon them: that's a great assurance that the Furnace of the Grave shall restore us to Incorruption.

6. *Fonns* cast up again, when the Whale had swallowed him; the Prophet slain by the Lion, but yet not devoured by him; both *Prædæ sue custodes*, and hopeful and comfortable Assurances of our Resurrection.

All these are sweet Resemblances and Arguments of our rising again, but none like this; *He that raised Christ from the dead, shall raise us also.* *Christ's Resurrection*,

1. Argues ours possible. *S. Paul* argues strongly from it; *If Christ be risen again, how say some, that there is no Resurrection?*

2. It makes ours probable, and easie. Death is now vanquish'd by *Christ's Resurrection*. When the Prison door is set open, it is easie to escape.

3. It makes ours necessary: If the Head be risen, the Members must follow after. *Christus non potest habere membra damnata.* The living Head, must not be united to dead Members.

We have seen the Author.

Thirdly, What is the Action? *He shall quicken our mortal bodies.* *Mortal bodies?* Why not our dead bodies? That seems to be more. *Mortuum* sounds more than *mortale*. No, purposely the Apostle uses this expression in this point of the Resurrection. *Mortale* is a great deal more than *Mortuum*; to be raised à *Mortalitate* is a great deal more than to be raised à *Morte*. It expresses three Excellencies of our Christian resurrection.

1. It frees us à *possibilitate mortis*; it takes away the necessity, nay more than so, the possibility of death. *Death shall have no more dominion over us.* Not only death shall be swallow'd up in victory, *1 Cor. 15.* but mortality shall be swallow'd up of life, *2 Cor. 5. 4.* Our Resurrection shall be according to the power of an endless life, as the Apostle speaks. This Resurrection far exceeds the Resurrection of *Lazarus*, and those others in Scripture. They were rais'd à *morte*, but not à *mortalitate*. The fit was rather removed than the disease cured. 'Tis a rule they have, *Qui comitialem morbum habent, ne quidem diebus quibus morbo vacant, sani dicuntur*; They who are troubled with the falling-sickness, upon their good days are not counted whole. Now *Mortalitas*, it is *Morbns caducus*, our Resurrection cures us of that; the core of death is consumed, the Root and fibre of death, all stub'd up.

Nay, our Resurrection sets us in an Immortality beyond that of *Adam*. He was indued with an Immortality, but not like this of ours. As was his liberty

berry from sin, so was his immortality and freedom from death. *Primalibertas fuit non peccare*; and so *Prima immortalitatis* was *posse non mori*. He might not have sinned, that was his Liberty; he might not have died, that was his Immortality. But the liberty from sin in Heaven, is, *Non posse peccare*, there they cannot sin; so is our immortality, *No posse mori* that we cannot die, it takes away *possibilitatem mortis*.

2. This Expression of quickning our mortal bodys, it brings with it a second excellency, a freedom from infirmitys, diseases, and weaknesses, they are *ma exordis*, Sprouts that grow from this Root of death. It will free us from all the sad sequels of mortality; No infirmity or deformity, or indecency, no pains, or diseases. Lame *Mephebosbeth* shall leap; blind *Isaac* shall see clearly; and ulcerous *Lazarus* shall be whole and sound.

3. It brings a third Excellency; it will free us, *à miseria*. Miseries and afflictions, and vexations, they are the concomitants of our mortality; this Resurrection shall exempt us from them too. Saint *John* assures of it, *Rev. 21.*

4. God shall wipe away all tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain; all these are passed by.

I come,

Fourthly, To the last thing, that is, the ground and reason of all, *Because his Spirit dwells in you*. The inhabitation of God's Spirit, that's the ground of our Resurrection. And the force and evidence of this reason may be deduced into these Particulars;

1. The dwelling of Gods Spirit in us, is a ground of our Resurrection, because it is *Vinculum Unionis*; the Spirit is the bond of our union, and conjunction with *Christ*. By it we are incorporated into his holy Body, and made members of it; Now then, if our head rise, all the members must rise with it; If the Head be in Heaven, the members shall not for ever perish in the Grave. *Not a bone of his was broken*. This union by the Spirit, 'tis like the touch of a Load-stone, it will attract, and draw us to him, that where he is, we shall be also. It is spoken of his hypostatical, but it is true also of his mystical union, *Quod semel assumpsit numquam deposuit*. *Christ* will part with none of his members. *Father, I will that where I am they shall be also*. *Because I live, ye shall live also*, *John 14. 19.*

2. This inhabitation of the Spirit grounds our Resurrection, *ratione proprietatis*. Our bodies by this inhabitation, are consecrated to be a possession of the *Holy Ghost*; and the Temple of God must not be destroyed. What *Christ* said of his own body, it is true of ours; *Destroy this Temple, and I will raise it up again*. *Necesse est Spiritui reddatur Templum suum*, saith *Tertul.* Gods Spirit takes pleasure not only in these living Temples, but owns them when they are dead; takes pleasure in the dead bones, and favours the dust of them, *Psal. 102.* As Philosophers say of the Soul, it is *Artifex sui domicilii*, it frames its own house of the body; so the Spirit of God repairs, re-edifies, rears up this Fabrick after it is taken down.

3. This Inhabitation of the Spirit, works our Resurrection, as being the Author of both that initial grace that entitles us, and gives us claim to the state of a Resurrection; Regeneration makes us *Children of the Resurrection*; as also, because it is the Author of that final grace, which plucks up the Root, eats out the Core of our mortality. Till then, as there be *Primitia gratiae*, so there are *Reliquiae peccati*; Those remainders of sin dispose us to death; but our final and finishing Grace roots up those *Fibrae peccati*; and sin, being abolish'd, death hath no dominion over us.

So then, for use of all.

1. Is the Habitation of the Spirit the ground of our Resurrection? doth that give us interest into the Resurrection of *Christ*? Sure then,

1. The benefit of this Resurrection belongs only to them, who have the Spirit of *Christ*, dwelling in them. The wicked and reprobate, they have no share in *Christ's* Resurrection; Not but that *Christ* raises the wicked at the last

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day ; but this he doth, *officio Judicis*, not *beneficio Mediatoris* ; by the authority of his supreme Judicature : All shall hear his voice, his summons shall raise them out of their Grave ; but the fruit, and benefit of his Mediation, or Resurrection, extends not to them.

1. Not by way of Merit ; he communicates no merit in the World to come to those, who have no interest in his merits in this present World.

2. Not by way of any actual efficacy ; there's no influence of *Christ*, but into his own members ; all influence of grace and virtue, either tends to union, or flows from it.

3. Not by way of example. *Christ's* Resurrection is not so much as the Pattern and Exemplar of theirs ; there's no assimilation 'twixt *Christ* and the wicked. They do not bear the Image of the second *Adam*, they are not planted into the Similitude of his death or Resurrection. He is the Resurrection, and the life to them that believe, *John 11.*

2. Besides ; the Resurrection that *Christ* merited, and communicates, is a beneficial, and beautiful Resurrection. *Meritum sonat in bonum* ; the Resurrection of the wicked tends to damnation. Better not rise, then rise to perdition : Better stay in Prison, than to be brought to execution. This rising, destroys not death, but increases, and redoubles it. In short,

3. The Resurrection of the wicked, 'tis no fruit of the Gospel, but a sequel of the Law ; not flowing from the second *Adam*, but is consequent upon the first ; no part of the Promise, *The seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's head* ; but a part of the Threatening, *Thou shalt die the death* ; Soul and Body, both to be destroy'd.

2. Shall we be raised, because his Spirit dwells in us ? See the sweet fruit, and benefit of giving place to *Christ*, and his Spirit, and devoting our selves to be an habitation to him ; he richly requites us for his habitation. See how *Satan* uses the bodies he possesses, *Luke 9. 39.* *Κραζαι καὶ σκαρδασει*, He rent, and tore them : Oh ! the Spirit of God keeps, and preserves them. As men say of their houses, Better Let them Rent-free to some that will use them well, and keep them in repair, than for Rent to others, that will havock, and spoyl them ; If *Satan* possesses thy body, besides the base usage he will put it to, he will make it a sink of sin, a dung hill of corruption, a Rendezvous of unclean Spirits ; all the Rent he pays thee, will be ruine, and destruction. But, if *Christ's* Spirit possess thee, besides the honour which his presence puts upon thee (if the King be in a Cottage, he makes it a Court) he will secure it, and maintain it, and make it good to thee.

Use thy body, and devote it to sensuality, it will end in corruption ; devote it to God, and his Spirit, it will rise to immortality. *S. Paul* speaks, *1 Cor. 6. 13.* *Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats* ; and what will become of it ? *God shall destroy both it and them.* But, *the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body* ; and then what follows ; *1 Pers. 14.* *God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.*

Dos immortalitatis ; Immortality, 'tis the Dowry that God assures to the body ; *The body is not for Fornication, but for the Lord* ; and he assures this Dowry, even a blessed Resurrection ;

Which God grant for his sake, who is the Resurrection, and the Life,
To whom, &c.

A

SERMON PREACHED ON WHIT-SUNDAY.

2 Kings 2. 9.

And it came to pass when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee let a double portion of thy Spirit be upon me.



THE two Testaments have a mutual relation, and reciprocal aspect, and interview one with another. Not any mystery of the New, but was shadowed out in the Old; not any type of the Old, but is represented, and exhibited, and fulfilled in the New.

They are placed about *Christ*, as the two Cherubs upon the Mercy-seat, looking each on other, and both on *Christ*.

The Faith of the Old Testament look'd forward expecting to behold the fullness of those Types; the Faith of the New Testament looks backward, to see the sweet prefigurations that were in the Old. That, as the motion of the Sun makes the shadow sometimes before the body, sometimes after it; so, the divers dispensations of God, make these Shadows sometimes useful before the *Messiah*, by way of prefiguration; sometimes after the body, by way of after remembrance, and representation.

In particular; Those two glorious Mysteries of our Faith, *Christ's* Ascension and his Donation of the Spirit (the one lately Celebrated, the other the subject of this Day's Solemnity) they were lively prefigured in the Prophet *Elijah*. *Christ's* Ascension, was typified in *Elijah's* Fiery-Chariot: The gift of the Holy-Ghost was typified in this Gift, and Grant, that is made to *Elisha*, The doubling the spirit of *Elijah* upon him: That was upon *Elisha*; The Spirit of *Christ* upon his Disciples.

The Text, 'tis a relation of the setting the gift, and spirit of Prophecie upon *Elisha*: And it is conferred upon him, not suddenly, and unexpectedly; but by the interposition of some mutual intercourse betwixt the Prophet, and *Elisha*.

This intercourse stands upon two parts;

1. *Elijah's* gracious proffer; *Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee.*
2. *Elisha's* wife, and religious desire; *I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.*

First, In *Elijah's* proffer, there are two things;

1. The Substance of the Motion, *Ask what I shall do for thee.*
2. The Circumstance of Time, and so the Opportunity of it, *Before I be taken away from thee.*

I. For

Serm. I. I. For the Substance of *Elijah's* proffer. In it these four particulars are remarkable :

1. The forwardness and freeness of it: 'Tis a preventing offer. *Elijah* stays not till *Elisba* sues to him, but prevents him, and makes the Motion first, and freely invites him to enjoy a blessing from him. True Charity, and desire of doing good stays not for entreaties, expects not importunity, but freely offers it self, and begins first. Thus *Isaac* called his Son to bless him, unsought-to. Thus *Christ*, called *Matthew*, who never look'd after him; bids himself to *Zachens*. As the Prophet bids the Widow borrow Vessels of her Neighbours to pour Oyl into; so Charity, borrows and begs of others to receive the communion of those graces with which she is furnished. *Elisba's* first calling was a preventing favour; now his second calling, 'tis by prevention. Christian Charity, is not like a dry and deep Pump, that must be often pumped before it sends out Water; but like a full Fountain, flowing over, and streaming to all about it. 'Tis *S. Chrysostoms* observation of *St. Pauls* readiness to the *Macedonians*; it must be an express revelation that must forbid him in *Asia* and *Bethinia*. They who are of *Elijahs*, and *St. Pauls* spirit, expect nothing but the opportunities, and advantages of communicating their goodness, *Acts* 16. That's the first, the freeness of it.

2. A second thing observable, is the fulness, and largeness of this his offer; *Ask what thou wilt*. The Popish Saints are limited to some sorts of blessing, wherein they may prevail. Such a Saint, he can pleasure thee in thy health; such an one is for such a Disease; such an one can bestow such a favour.

Here is a Favourite of Heaven can speed any suit, procure any favour, or blessing, that is fitting for thee. What cannot the Prayer of an *Elijah* obtain? He can open, and shut Heaven; bring down Fire, or Water, as *St. James* speaks of him. *Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man doth send to me?* said the King of *Israel* to those that were sent to him from *Siria*, *2 Kings* 5. But what saith *Elisba*? *Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a Prophet in Israel*. God hath given a kind of Omnipotency to the Prayers of his Saints. The King can deny you nothing. Prayer is a Key, that opens all Gods Store-Houses. And he gives this Key to his Saints and Children. Happy they who enjoy the Society of such an *Elias*. But thrice happy they, who have the spirit of *Elijah*? who can be agents for themselves, and all who seek to them.

But I demand, Was it safe to make such an unlimited offer to *Elisba*? To trust him with such an unbounded wish, to ask what he would?

I answer, We must conceive this large and liberal proffer is bounded, and circumscribed with these limitations:

1. The Caveat of lawful Conditions, and matter of Expediency. God never gives us so ample a power to ask what we will but straitens it up with these Proviso's; If lawful, If useful, If absolutely necessary, If agreeable to his Will, If serviceable to his Glory. Observe these Proviso's, and ask what thou wilt. *Solomon*, in *1 Kings* 2. 21. bids *Bethsheba*, *Ask on, my mother, for I will not say thee nay*. But yet her unadvised petition, was justly denied her. If we ask things agreeable to his will, we know he heareth us, *1 John* 5. 14. Then God saith, as to the Woman of *Canaan*, *Matth.* 15. 28. *Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt*.

2. A second limitation, is, *Congruitas vocationis*. If *Elisba* means to speed, it must be a Suit answerable and fitting to his State and Calling. *Elisba* was a Prophet; let him ask what befits a Prophet to ask, and he shall not return empty. The Mother of *Zebedees* Sons sped not in her request to *Christ*. Why? Her Suit in general might be lawful, but it agreed not with them to ask such favours; *Ye know not what ye ask: Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am to be baptized with?* *Matth.* 20. 22. So *Feremy* to *Baruch*, *Seekest thou great things for thy self? Seek them not.* *Jer.* 45. 5.

3. A third limitation, is, *Idonietas persone obtinentis*: Ask what is fit for *Elijah* to grant thee. Dost thou meet with a Prophet? Ask the proper gift of a Prophet. We must learn the art of making the best improvement of the Saints

saints of God, to share in those excellencies wherewith God hath furnished them. As *Christ* saith to the Woman of *Samaria*, *If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee Living water.* As *S. Peter* said to the lame man, *Silver and Gold have I none, but such as I have I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Rise up and walk,* Acts 3. 6. Thus where the Apostles, or *Christ* came, they brought out their sick, and their blind, and their dumb, and their deaf. Dost thou gain the opportunities of an *Elijah*? Ask that which is proper to an *Elijah* to grant. When one said to *Christ*, *Master, speak to my Brother that he divide the Inheritance with me: He said unto him, Man, Who made me a Judge or a Divider over you?*

4. A fourth limitation that warrants this Offer, is, *Intima directio*: That Spirit that directed him to offer, would direct *Elisha* to ask. *We know not what we should pray for, as we ought; but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us,* Rom. 8. 26. God bids *Solomon* ask what he would; but withal, inspires him with such a Prayer as should find acceptance.

3. A third thing observable, is the Reality and Efficacy of this proffer; *What shall I do for thee?* There is Substance and Reality in that word. Alas! What can *Elijah* do? For temporal blessings, he was to seek himself: for spiritual, they are the immediate dispensations of God himself. True; and yet he calls it a Doing, and Giving. Faith reckons upon Prayers and Intercessions, it makes according to the will of God, as if they were real and full Donations; is as sure to obtain them, as if it were already put into the possessions of them. See this in *Isaac's* benediction and blessings of *Jacob*, Gen. 27. 37. *Behold, I have made him thy Lord, and all his Brethren have I given to him for Servants; and with Corn and Wine have I sustained him.* How did he this? vers. 28. He said, *God give it thee; God give thee of the dew of Heaven, and the fatness of the Earth, and plenty of Corn and wine.* A faithful Prayer, it is as good as an actual Donation. Thus *S. Paul*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. *As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing, and bestowing all things.* *Oratio, 'tis promus & condus.* It is set over all Gods Store-Houses. They, under God, are the true Benefactors, that are to God most religious Suiters and Petitioners. Here is a way by which the poorest may be beneficial, give, make rich. Prize these Prayers; especially the Prayers of those whom God hath appointed to bless in his name.

4. A fourth thing observable, is the Wisdom and Order of this proffer: He will have him ask it, before he gives it. Though Gods grace be never so free, yet he requires that we should crave it of him. There is one blessing that God gives unask'd, and that is the grace of Asking. After-graces are given when we pray; only he prevents us with the grace of Prayer. *God is found of them that sought not for him,* Isai. 65. 1. to wit, by giving them the grace to seek for him. We must not look for his Spirit to enter into us sleeping, or without thinking of it. *Ask, and it shall be given you; Seek, and you shall find; Knock, and it shall be opened unto you,* Matth. 7. 7. *Your Heavenly Father will give the holy Spirit to them that ask him,* Luke. 11. 13. The Well of Grace is deep; but, *Oratio, 'tis fitula gratia*; the Bucket, without which there is no drawing up any Water of Grace.

Happy we! who may have Grace for asking.

Wretched we! who will not ask, when we may have it.

We have done with the Substance of *Elijah's* proffer. Come we now.

II. To the Circumstance of time, *Before I be taken from thee.* Before I be taken from thee, beg what thou wilt.

1. Observe, *Elijah* being to leave the World, his thoughts are for after-succession, that he may leave a Prophet in the Church of God; he will not leave the Church unfurnished, the people of God unprovided for. Oh! The Saints of God are solicitous, not only for the present age wherein they live, but forecast for succession, that the worship of God may survive them, and
that

Serm. II.

and that after posterities may be converted. *Moses*, how doth he pray for a Leader after him? *Numb. 27. 16, 17.* Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the Congregation, which may go out before them, and may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in, that the Congregation of the Lord be not as *Shepherd* which have no Shepherd. How doth *St. Paul* charge the Churches for things after his Death? *Acts 20.* *St. Peter* being to die, fore-warns the Elders—*2 Pet. 1.*

How wicked are they, who, so they may see peace and prosperity in their days, little care what may befall the Church in succeeding Generations. Good *David*, though he was forbid to build the Temple, yet how did he store up for *Solomon's Temple*? *1 Chron. 22.* Oh! we enjoy the worship and service of God, and now stand by the care of others, let us not be wanting in our cares and Prayers, that a perpetual service may be offered by those who shall live after us, till the coming of *Jesus Christ* to Judgment.

2. Observe he provides for the enabling of *Elisba*: He did not only anoint him, but now furnishes him, being himself to die, and to leave the World. Flesh and Blood would have thought, let him be imperfect, and deficient, they will wish me again; his defects will be a foil for my excellencies. An unworthy Successor, commends his Predecessor. Oh no; He desires to empty out all his Graces into *Elisba*, and rejoiced to see an *Elisba* so able to succeed him. The Nobles prayed, *1 King. 1. 37.* The Lord make the Throne of *Solomon*, greater than the Throne of *King David*, yet there was no jealousy in *David*. Glad they are that the Graces in their Successors may obscure them, that they may not be missed.

3. Observe, *Elijah* is now most forward, and ready to do good, when he is to depart, and to leave this World. Saints, though they are always desirous to do good, yet at their Death, oh then, they are more abundant in all holy desires of doing good. Full of blessings they are always, but at their leaving the World, then they deal their Benedictions more plentifully about them. So did *Moses* in his Song; so dealt *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; and so did *Elisba* deal with the King of *Israel*; *Christ* with his Disciples on Mount *Olivet*; *St. Peter* when he was to lay down his Tabernacle. Oh then all Graces are most pregnant; their Faith; their Repentance, their Hope, their Prayers, their Blessings, Counsels, Reproofs; they will take their fill of them. The Box of Ointment, when it is broken fills the House with the smell. They love to be sacrificed upon the service of the Church. *St. Paul* leaving the *Ephesians*, preached till midnight, imparts all to them.

4. Observe, he saith Ask of me, before I be taken from thee: Had *Elijah* been of the Faith of *Rome*, there had been no need of this limitation; nay, rather Ask of me, and invoke, and pray to me, after I am in Heaven; there I shall sue for thee, call then upon me, No such matter. If we will make use of *Elijah*, do it now. We may use Reverend Compellations now, not tender religious supplications thither. *Heb. 12. 23.* *Ye are come to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant*; they are not Mediators. *Joseph* desired the Butler to remember him, but he forgot him. It was the pious meditation of *St. Augustine*, upon those words of the Psalmist, *Psal. 123. 2.* Behold, as the eyes of Servants look unto the hand of their Masters, and as the eyes of a Maiden unto the hand of her Mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have mercy upon us. Observe saith the Father, here upon Earth we have Masters, and Mistresses; but in Heaven, *Non habemus Dominum & Dominam*, but only our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, that must have mercy upon us. Now follows,

Secondly, *Elisba's* desire; I pray thee let a double portion of thy Spirit be upon me. He answers not *Elijah*, as *Abaz* to *Isaiah*, when he bad him ask a Sign, no, I will not ask, *Isai 7. 11, 12.* *Elijah* no sooner makes proffer, but he lays hold on it. 'Tis good making use of *Elijah* while we have him with us, unfold our wants to him, that he may supply them. *Elijah* must not always continue among us. The times may come, when we shall wish to see one of the days of the Son of man, and it shall not be. Oh, in this thy day, now the Angle is stirring the Water, yet

yet *Elijah* is among us; do as *Elisba*, he makes, haste petitions him presently. *Serm. I.*

Of which Petition, take a double Consideration :

1. *Quid Supponit.*

2. *Quid Petit.*

I. *Quid Supponit*; Here are four Supposals :

1. The first Supposal, is, *Identitas Spiritus*. He supposes the same Spirit will be settled upon him, that rested on *Elijah*. Here is a continuation of the the same Spirit in a succession of men. *Elijah* is taken away. Yes; but his Spirit shall remain. The means and instruments of grace may be removed, but the gifts of the Spirit shall continue still. It is worth the observing, God eyes not himself to any personal perfections. Oh, we think, If such a Saint dies, what will become of the Church? 'Tis a loss; but yet, in diversity of men, here is the same Spirit. When *Moses* died, his spirit rested upon *Joshua*. *Aaron* died, *Eleazar* was invested, and clothed with the same Spirit. It must comfort us, when we see glorious Instruments taken from us; *Paul*, a *Luther*, &c. yet the same spirit remains, and breaths in his Church. As it was said to the evil servant, *Tolle talentum, &c.*; so of the good. The Lord needs no mans person, or parts, he can set his Spirit upon another.

2. A second Supposal, is *Portio Spiritus*. The Spirit of *Elijah* is apportioned out in a limited dispensation. It is *variè utitur*. We receive but in part; no man hath all in kind, or degrees. *To one is given by the Spirit, the word of Wisdom; to another, the word of Knowledge by the same Spirit; to another the gift of Healing; to another Prophecy, &c.* 1 Cor. 12.8,9,10. The most enriched Saint hath but what he enjoys, in measure; they have indeed a fulness, but then it is only.

1. A fulness of Capacity.

2. A fulness of Sufficiency for their use, but not of absolute Perfection: *Aaron* had the Spirit poured on him, others had it but sprinkled. *Quantum causa exigit, propter quam datur, Ambros.*

3. A third Supposal is, *Inaqualitas portionum*. There is a single portion, and a double portion. Some have one talent, some two, another five. There is not any Saint but hath one, not any that have all, but some more, some less. *Benjamin's* Mefs was five times as much as any of the rest of his Brethrens.

4. A fourth Supposal is, *Duplicatio in juniore*. *Elisba* the Successor, and Junior, may have a double Portion, more than *Elijah* his Predecessor. God can cross his hands, as *Jacob* did, and lay his right hand upon *Ephraim's* head, who was the Younger; and his left hand upon *Manasse's* head, who was the first born, Gen. 48. 14. We cannot prescribe to God. 'Tis neither the Age of Men, nor the precedency of times, that is any thing, but the Lord may be as bountiful to this Age, as unto Antiquity. It is no disparagement to *Elijah*, that *Elisba* exceeds him. After-Ages may be furnished with more eminent men in some kinds, than the more Primitive and Antient times have been. We worthily reverence Antiquity, and rise up at the Gray-head; but yet God may double some gifts on their Successors. *Augustine, Hierom*, the rest, were most reverend; yet *Luther, Calvin*, others, more famous in their Generation.

There is a double Use of a double Portion.

1. For Founding.

2. For Repairing and Reforming of Churches; and as great a measure of the Spirit is as necessary for this, as that. *John* must come *Spiritu in Elia* to found the Gospel. After-Ages have the promise of the spirit of *Elias* too, in reforming. The one to Preach *Christ*, the other to resist *Antichrist*. How do some slight our late Worthys! *These Novelists, Modern, Yesterday-Divines*. But, *Quis contempsit diem parvulorum?* And, *let no man despise thy youth*. As it is said of some good Kings, none like *David*, none like *Hezekiah*, none like to *Josiah*, before or after; Why? because each excelled in some personal grace of Zeal, or Piety, or Integrity; So these late ones were eminent in some things, before all

A a

other

Serm. I. other that preceded, *Patres tum demum vincunt cum vincuntur a filiis*. Ancients would have gloried in their posterity, and why envielt thou for their sakes? That's for the first; *Quid Supponit*? Now follows,

II. *Quid petit*? The sum of his Desire; *That a double portion of thy Spirit may be upon me.*

In it observe two things:

1. The matter of his Desire, that's *Elijah's Spirit*.
2. The Measure of it. *A double portion*.

First, The Matter of his Request. Had many of us such a large Offer made us, to ask what we would, I fear we should not have pitched upon this request of *Elisba*, for a spiritual blessing. *Elijah* had a power of curing, and raising from the dead; health, and long life, some would have asked. *Elijah* could cause plenty, bring Famine, increase Oyl; others would have urged a supply of riches. *Elijah* could bring down fire to consume his Enemies; others would have desired Victory, and Safety. The Lord implies, that, naturally these are our carnal desires, in his reply to *Solomon*, 1 Kings 3. 11. *Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thy self long life, neither hast asked riches for thy self, nor hast asked the life of thine Enemies, &c.*

See, here is one who passes by all these, and knows how to frame a Petition aright, that he is sure shall speed; the Prayer for the Spirit. Oh, 'tis a great advantage, to know what to pray for. *Docet dare qui prudenter rogat*; The chusing of the better part, prevails with God. *Herod* offers to the *Damofel*, to ask what she will; and she asks the head of *S. John the Baptist*, the life of her Enemy. *Piery* will ask the spirit of the *Baptist*.

But why doth *Elisba* pitch upon this request? Why begs he the Spirit?

1. He had *Spiritum vocantem*, now he begs the Spirit enabling. He was called to a spiritual Function, now he sues for a spiritual enablement for the discharge and execution of it. If God puts us into a Calling, we must beg and seek for gifts answerable to it. See *Moses*, how importunate was he with God for enablement? *Solomon*, call'd to the Kingdom, begs a Kingly Spirit. How many are there, who sue for the Calling, but seldom crave the Enabling? It must be so in every employment. Art thou called to an Office? beg Wisdom, Courage, Fidelity. Art thou a Servant? beg the graces suitable. Art thou in any course of life? go to God for enablement, that he may make thee an able Member in the Church or Common-wealth. In every course of life, we must labour for Skill, and Prudence, and Sufficiency. In thy Calling, strive to excel, to the edifying of the Church. Gods Work-men have a wise Spirit, to work all cunning work. *Jacobs* Sons were men of Activity, therefore *Pharoah* would employ them.

2. He asks that which was fittest for *Elijah* to grant him. *Elijah* had a kind of Universality of obtaining any thing, but it was proper for him to give that which himself excelled in. They are *Dona dextra* that move most readily; *Dona throni*, not *Bona scabelli*. With men we grant small requests, and stick at great gifts; but God gives his best gifts most readily.

3. *Elijah* is now leaving the World: Now *Elisba* sees what it was that comforted *Elijah*, and stood him in stead. Oh, it was this, that he had been an able and faithful Prophet, an holy man; it was that which made him leave the World thus peaceably, comfortably, willingly. This makes *Elisba* crave the Spirit. All outward things, what comfort can they breed at our last parting? Give me that that may breed matter of comfort at my last need; make me such a Prophet, that I may so live, as I may die like *Elijah*.

Look upon a rich man dying, see what comfort he gets by his riches, or honours. Look on a man replenish'd with Gods Spirit, one who hath done God much service, now ready to have his Lords *Euge*, and to enter into that joy; it will make thee wish one dram of grace, rather than the whole World besides. Judge of *Elijah*, hid in Mount *Carmel* for Persecution; and look on *Baal's* Priests ruffling in *Jezebel's* Court, it may tempt thee to wish their Honour: Ey, but stay

stay a while, see their Honour, and *Elijah's* glorious Death, or Departure: it *Serm. 1.*
will make thee neglect the one, to beg the other; and chuse rather to die in
Elijah's hairy Mantle, than in all their bravery.

So much for the matter of his desire; Now follows,

Secondly, The measure of it, *A double portion of thy Spirit*. Why so? What makes him desire a greater measure than *Elijah* had? What? Was it envy, and carnal emulation, to out-strip *Elijah*? Or ambition, to be more renowned in his Generation? 'Tis true, a man may be proud of the Spirit, desirous to set up himself. But it was not so in *Elisba*. What may we conceive rais'd his desires so high?

1. *Dignitas doni*; The excellency of these kind of gifts. Spiritual graces deserve eager pursuits, and vehement desires of them. A man may beg too much of outward blessings; but of spiritual gifts to save himself and others, we cannot be too covetous in getting of them. Διώκατε, ζηλούτε τὰ πνεύματα, μαλλον, 1 Cor. 14. 1. Be zealously affected to spiritual Graces, strive to excel for the edifying of the Church. *Solomon* craves abundance of Wisdom; but of Riches, only what is moderate and convenient. *S. Peter*, when he heard of the virtue that was in *Christs* washing; then he saith to *Chriss*, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. How preposterous are our desires generally? We crave two Portions of outward Blessings; but, a little Knowledge, little Abilities to do good, content us well.

2. *Eminentia exempli*; The lustre of *Elijah's* example hath ravish'd him: The Spirit that was so eminent and conspicuous in him, it begets an holy emulation to attain, and outgo him. Oh, to see grace of any sort incorporate and incarnate in another man, it provokes the endeavours of others, makes them long to be excellent in such graces. This stirred up *Simon Magus*, to see *S. Peter* so glorious, he would needs purchase such a gift. When we see Religion clasp'd up in Books, it works not so effectually; when we see it real and operative, then it works kindly upon us, makes others (if they have any mettle in them) to attain the like. Those who damp and smother the gifts of God in them, they hinder the progress and growth of grace in others. To see men carry Grace as men do a Candel in a dark Lanthorn, only for themselves, it hinders emulation, but to make it shine forth, and to be radiant, invites others to an holy ambition to out-strip, and exceed, and go beyond their Copies.

3. *Gustus initialis gratiae*; *Elisba* had some beginnings of these gifts before; he hath felt the sweetness, and excellency of them; it makes him therefore the more earnest and eager to be rich in Grace. They who have once felt the sweetness of Gods Spirit in any kind, they cannot satisfie themselves in any stint, but are earnest for more. The true Relishes of Gods first gifts, beget not loathing but longing; makes men to cry out, Lord evermore give us this br ad, and to desire That the word of God may dwell plenteously in th m. Grace, it is always growing, ascending. They who content themselves with their first beginnings, have cause to suspect, they were not true and kindly. How doth *St. Paul* pray for more enablement; They who think they know enough know nothing as they should.

4. *Pondus officii*; He is now to undergo a weighty Service, to become the main Prophet of the People of God; tis a burden heavy enough for Angels, and Archangels. The sense of this weight makes him call, and beg for a double Portion. There is no Calling, but carries its burden, and so craves help; but the Prophetical Calling, that's an heavy Talent. What knowledge and understanding, what courage and resolution, what patience and forbearance is required? and all little enough for an *Elisba's* employment. This made *Solomon* beg; Oh, tis a great People, give thy Servant therefore a large Heart. It made *Moses* shrink his shoulder from under it. They who in any kind are to govern others, undergo a weighty burden; they must beg a double Portion.

5. *Ardor zeli*; His desire of doing much good makes him thus earnest for much enablement. He desires to be a faithful Servant, to bring in much gain,

Sermon to give up a large account of his Stewardship. They who think any service sufficient, any performance enough, they may content themselves with small portions of gifts. Here is one who is ambitious of gaining God much glory, of saving many Souls.

6. *Gravitas damni*; The loss of an *Elias* stirs him up to crave a double Portion. *Elijah* was set for the defence of Religion, the burden of the Church rested on his shoulders; Now, that the Church hath lost him, it inflames *Elisba* to get himself furnish'd for to do that service. Oh, when we see the Church loses her choicest Parrons, and Upholders, it must not make us faint, but double our endeavours, that that loss may be recovered. So *Moses* my servant is dead, arise *Fosbua*, play the man now. This made *Elijah* zealous before; there is none left, *I even I only am left*, 1 Kings 19. 10; so it doth now *Elisba*. The daily losses that the Church suffers, should make us more forward in doing all the good we can.

7. *Sensus infirmitatum*; He desires a double Portion in respect of *Elijah*, out of a sense of his own infirmities. He conceived *Elijah* to be a man more able and sufficient, even by natural parts; and he was conscious to himself of his own insufficiency; and therefore he judges a double Portion was necessary for him, whereas a less Portion enabled *Elijah*. A true sense of our unworthiness, and infirmities, will make us more zealously earnest for a larger enablement of Gods gracious assistance. This made the Prophet cry out, *I am a man of unclean lips*, *Isai*. 6. 5. *Moses* oft pleads his insufficiency. Wouldst thou be stirred up, and made more capable of grace in any kind? Look not upon thine own strength, but upon thine infirmities; Lord, *I am a Child, and cannot speak, who is sufficient for these things?* *Saul* got a new Spirit, when he said, *I am of the smallest of the Tribes of Israel, and my family the least of all the families of the Tribe of Benjamin*, 1 Sam. 9. 21.

8. *Sensus difficultatum*; *Elisba's* Ministry was likely to fall into difficult times. *Ahab* and *Fezabel* had so spawn'd the Church with Idolatry, and Sorcery, and Persecutions, that *Elisba* sees nothing but Opposition. He is to encounter with a whole Nation of Idolaters. There were seventy Sons of *Ahab* left in *Samaria*, and a Succession of Persecutors like to continue. According to the difficulty of the work he begs the larger enablement. He shrinks not from the Service; only he begs Assistance.

The rising of Persecution and Opposition must not discourage, but provoke, and stir us up to sollicite for greater enablement. when times are peaceable, less gifts may do good. In a Calm any body may serve to guide the Ship, but in a Tempest, then all sufficiencies are little enough. Thus the Church, *Acts* 4. 28. Now Lord, behold their threatnings, and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word. By stretching forth thine hand, Verse 30. The Persecutions of the Church, must not deter, but provoke us to a greater enabling of our selves. In danger of Heresie, be more grounded in Religion. A double portion of Knowledge is then requisite.

Well then,

1. Doth *Elisba* beg of *Elijah*? If He draws from the Chancel, how should we have recourse to the Fountain? *Christ* is not only the Obtainer, but the Sovereign Dispenser of all grace. Go to him now ascended. *Elijah* ascended, ceases his Intercession. *Christ* now intercedes most of all; He is set over all the Store-houses of God; as *Foseph* was over those of *Pharaoh's* in *Agypt*: As therefore they to *Foseph*, so let us to *Christ*. When he ascended on high, He gave gifts unto men, *Eph*. 4. 8. He it is who breaths out the Spirit. Ever unfold thy wants to him, beg supplies of him.

2. If *Elisba* begs Prophetical Endowments, which are variously bestowed, then may we be more forward to pray for those necessary, sanctifying graces of the Spirit. A man may seek for those *χαρισματα*, and God sometimes deny them; But Faith, Repentance, Holiness, those he will never deny. They are

are covenanted for, if thou seekest for them. Thou mayest pray and pray to be a Prophet, and not obtain; pray for saving grace, God will not reject thee. These we should importune for, most earnestly; they being evidences of special favour, pledges of Salvation.

3. Doth *Elisba* thus seek for enablements to do the Church Service? It should provoke others to joyn with *Elisba* in this request. It is for thy good that *Elisba* prays, that he might be fitted to save thee, Oughtest not thou to joyn, in obtaining this grace? Thus St. Paul calls upon the Churches, *Pray for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel.* Let us pray that God would shed his Spirit richly upon his Ministers. They who feed the Nurse, do it for the Childs sake that sucks on her. So should you pray that the Lord would encrease his Spirit, on those that dispence the Word to you.

4. *Elisba* he desires to imitate and exceed *Elijah*. *Elisba* a Prophet, sets *Elijah* a Prophet for his Pattern. So in all Callings and Professions, propound the Examples of the choicest Worthys that are before thee, Art thou a Magistrate? say, Oh that the Spirit of *Nehemiah* may be doubled upon me. Art thou a Master? Oh that the Spirit of *Cornelius*, whose whole Household was Religious, may be doubled upon me. Art thou poor or sick? Oh that the Spirit of *Job* may be doubled upon me. Art thou rich? Oh that the Spirit of *Abraham*, or *Dorcus*, may be doubled upon me. Art thou a Child? Oh that the Spirit of *Isaac* might be doubled upon me. Art thou a Servant? Oh that the Spirit of *Eleazar* might be doubled upon me. Look upon the choicest Copies, write after them, imitate those, that do excel in the way, wherein God hath placed thee.

A

S E R M O N

ON
St. Luke 21. 34.

Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life; and so that day come upon you unawares.



THE Chapter contains,

First, A serious fore-warning that *Christ* gives to his Disciples of the approach, and drawing near of the day of Judgment. A Truth, never unseasonable to be taught, and believed in the Church of God; but yet most proper and suitable to the times of Christianity. The times of the Gospel, in which we live, are call'd, *The last days*, Heb. 1. 2. Brethren, the time is short, saith S. Paul, 1 Cor. 7. The ends of the World are come upon us Christians, 1 Cor. 10. 11. Not but that the times before *Christ* had this warning given them; and those Primitive Saints took notice of it. *Enoch*, that lived in the first Age of the Church, preached this Truth to the old World. God by the Spirit of Prophecy, reveal'd it; and he by the Eye of Faith, clearly discerned it, as if he had seen *Christ* coming in the Clouds. Hear what S. Jude saith, vers 14. *Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these times; Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints, to execute Judgment.* And the Prophets spake so clearly of our Saviours coming to Judgment in Glory, that the Jews (as *Tertullian* observes) mistook his second coming for his first; they interpreted the predictions of his last appearance, for his first coming into the World in his Incarnation.

The teaching of this Truth, was not then unseasonable; but yet, of the two Ages of the Church, the doctrine of the day of Judgment is most proper and agreeable to us Christians. The Faith of the Patriarchs and Prophets, was chiefly employed about *Christ's* first Coming, and Incarnation; the Faith of Christians must now expect and wait for his second Coming in Glory to Judgment. They listned to hear the first voice, gentle and meek, as the voice of a Lamb; we must be attentive to hear his voice, that is dreadful, and terrible, as the roaring of a Lion.

Answerable to these two Epoches, and Periods of the Churches Faith, the Scripture tells of two days of *Christ*.

1. The day of his Incarnation; the Prophets and Patriarchs fixed most upon that; *Abraham* rejoiced to see that day, *John* 8. 56. Then,
2. The Scripture tells us of a second day of *Christ*; that is, the day of his Coming to Judgment. That is called, *The day of the Lord* 2 Pet. 3. *The day of Jesus Christ*, Phil. 1. 6. It is called, *The dreadful day of the Lord*, Malach. 4. 5. *The great day of his wrath*, Revel. 6. 17. For this day must be the expectation, and preparation of Christians. St. Peter tells us, 'Tis our duty to look for, and to hasten to the Coming of this day of God, 2 Pet. 3. 12. That is the first thing I note here, *Christ* forewarneth it.

Secondly, He doth not only forewarn it, that one day, sooner or later it will come upon us, but he tells them of many signs and prognosticks of the approaching of it: vers. 25. there shall be signs of it, and they certain, and infallible, and dreadful,

dreadful, and dismal, that will astonish the beholders. Indeed, the particular season, and set time of it, is reserved and concealed from us, and that for great and good purpose; but yet *Christ* hath furnished his Church with such signs and tokens of it, in the fulfilling of which, we may plainly conclude. The day is drawing on, and now approaching; that we may resolve with *St. John*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 18. *We know that it is the last time.* See, saith *St. James*, *The Judge standeth before the door.* Who knows how soon he will enter in upon us? That's the second; he foretells the signs of it.

Thirdly, He doth not only forewarn it, and foretell the signs of it, but premonisheth, and giveth a Caveat to us, that we should carefully provide for it.

1. Be the truth of his Coming never so certain:

2. Be the signs and tokens of it never so manifest: yet,

3. If we look not well about us, we may be surprised by it. It may rush in upon us, when we little think of it. *St. Paul* tells us, It shall come suddenly, as the thros and travel of a Woman with Child, 1 *Thes.* 5. 3. Let a Woman with Child keep her reckoning never so carefully, yet the just time and season of her travelshe may not know; she may be taken with those pangs, when she little looks for them.

So then, we have here a strict Caveat given us; a warning piece shot off, to arouse and awaken us against the day of Judgment. And it stands upon two Particulars;

1. Here is a special Caution against a dangerous indisposition that will make us unfit for the entertainment of that day; that is *Gravedo cordis*; a spiritual surcharge and surfeit that our Souls may fall into, that will so clog, and dull, and oppress the heart, that it can never heed nor expect, or once think of the day of reckoning that must come upon us: That's *vers.* 34.

2. Here is a special direction to an holy preparation, and fitting our selves against that day; that is the duty of *Vigilancy*; that we should keep Sentinel continually, stand upon our Watch, expect daily, prepare hourly, fit our selves carefully for the entertainment of that fatal day, *vers.* 36.

The Text contains the first, the Caution. In it observe these particulars;

1. The Caveat it self; *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time.*

2. The distemper and indisposition to be avoided; that is, oppressing and overcharging our hearts.

3. The Causes that will breed this surcharge of our hearts, *Surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life.*

4. The mischief that will follow, if this Caveat be neglected, *That day may come upon us unawares*; and then, wo be to us.

We come,

First, to the Caveat: In it three things:

1. It is the duty of heedfulness, and attention, *προσέχετε, Take heed.*

2. The persons concerning whom this Caveat is given, *Your selves.*

3. The greatness, and measure, and strictness of this heed, in this vigilant, and watchful word of circumspection, *μὴ ποτε, Lest at any time.*

I. The first thing you must consider, is the duty of heedfulness and attention, *Take heed*, saith *Christ*. 'Tis the solemn watch word and warning of Scripture, often urged, and pressed upon us. *Take heed to thy self*, saith *Moses*, *that thine heart be not deceived*, *Deut.* 11. *Take good unto your selves*, *Josb.* 23. *Take diligent heed*, *Josb.* 22. *Take heed, and beware*, saith *Christ*, *Matth.* 16. It is a warning always seasonable, we all stand in need of it; but especially in three Exigences;

1. If the duty we undertake, the business about which we are employed, be weighty, and ponderous. Matters of less moment and consequence, may be slubbered and slighted, but matters of importance require heed and attention. Now, matters of Religion, that concern our spiritual state and condition, the eternal welfare of our Souls, are of all others, of highest consequence, of greatest concernment. O! set your hearts unto it, saith *Moses*, *for it is not a vain thing for*

you

Sermon. you, because it is your life, *Deut. 32. 46.* again, *Deut. 4. 9.* Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently. And, amongst all the duties of Religion, the fitting of our Souls for the day of Judgment, the Survey, and examination of our Consciences, making freight our accounts against that day of reckoning, it is a most weighty business. That is the first enforcement of this duty of Heed; the matter is exceeding serious.

2. There is a second Exigent of this Care, and heed, which makes this Caveat seasonable that is, the approach of some great danger, and miscarriage. Safety may breed security; but, when we go upon hazards, and dangers, then we look about, and arouse our selves to care, and heedfulness. Now, there is no underraking to beset with dangers, as the duty of Religion, and the managing of our spiritual condition. The way of Piety is exceeding narrow, and down-falls on both sides. A Christian is *Salvus funambulus*. The way to Heaven, it is no broad high way, but a narrow path, we may soon tread awry. Especially, the dangers of the last day, and the hazards that our Souls must run, at that great day, of trial and account, are most perilous.

3. Above all, this Caveat is most seasonable, and necessary if the miscarriages we may fall into be irrecoverable, and such as there is no getting out of them. In those miscarriages that may be recovered, and fetch'd about again, there is some hope; but if the danger we go upon, be deadly, and desperate, once miscarried, and lost for ever. Oh then take heed, the whole stock is at the stake, if thou miscarriest here, thou art undone for ever. Such is the hazard and miscarriage of the day of Judgment. Other days, and duties may have a revolution, if we fail at one time, we may mend it afterwards, an after-game may recover all again. But the state and condition which Death, and the day of Judgment will put us into, it is fixed, and unalterable. *As the Tree falls so it lies.* As death leaves us, so Judgment shall find us. *It is appointed for all men once to dye, and then after death comes judgment, Heb. 9. 27.* Once to die, and but once. Had we a succession of lives, and deaths (as *Origen*, and some others fondly fancied) then had we miscarried in one, we might recover our selves in a second. No, we must die once for all, and then comes Judgment. The sentence that then shall be passed upon us, it is not to be re-called; it is not (as the Civilians speak in their Law) an Interlocutory Sentence; but final, and peremptory, never to be reversed. *Delib. randum est aia, quod statuendum est semel.* In all Contracts and Bargains, every man will take heed of that that must bind him for ever. How much more should we take heed to our selves in this final, and fatal business; in our preparations to the day of Judgment?

Come we to the next Particular; which is,

II. The Persons who are concerned in this Caveat, to whom our Saviour directs this Caveat, *Attendite vobis, Take heed to your selves.* Christ brings this Caveat home to them, and lays it close to their hearts and consciences; they must look about them, it concerns them.

And then the strength, and force of this Application to these Persons, will appear by these three expressions, which will more fully set out the nature and necessity of the Caveat.

1. *Vobis sciscitantibus, & inquirentibus;* You that are questioning, and enquiring about that day, *Take you heed to your selves.* In the seventh Verse, we find the Disciples (so *S. Matthew* terms them, *Chap. 24.*) asking of Christ,

1. Concerning the time of his Coming.

2. Enquiring of those signs that shall forego, and usher in, the day of his Appearing. And Christ in part satisfies their Query; acquaints them with his coming to judgment, and the signs of it; But withal, takes occasion from their curious question, to enforce upon them a profitable, and useful, and necessary exhortation, *Take heed to your selves.* He doth not say, *Attendite signis;* you do well to be inquisitive about the signs of my coming, to be able to calculate the times, to foresee and foretel the end of the world, and my coming to judgment; but this he urgeth; *Attendite Vobis,* look well to your selves, to your own state

state and condition, how that day shall find you; Ask your selves *Isaiah's* question, *Serm. I.* Chap. 10. 3. *What will you do in the day of Visitation?* Ask also *Ezekiel's* question, Chap. 22. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hand be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee?* And yet again, *Isai.* 33. 14. *Who amongst us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*

Our Saviour calls them off from musing upon these wonderful Prognostications, (as the Angel speaks, *Acts* 1. 11. *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing in-to Heaven?*) The darkness of the Sun, the falling of the Stars, the roaring of the Sea, the trembling of the Heavens; he bids them call their thoughts homewards, and fore-cast with themselves, how they shall be able to abide that day, and undergo the trial of it.

It gives plain check and reproof to the curious Enquiries that naturally we are prone to make into Gods secrets. Our Brains will be full of questions, and speculations, about many high Mysteries; but our hearts remain void of those sad, and serious thoughts, to make good use of them to our selves. A man may be very curious, and yet withal extreme careless; exceeding inquisitive in matters of knowledge, and yet notoriously careless in the practice part.

The consideration of the day of Judgment, 'tis not a matter of contemplation, as it were to see a blazing Star, an Eclipse of the Sun, or some wonder in Nature: but it abodes some great thing to us-wards. Meditate upon it, as upon the day of thine account, and of thy making or marring for ever. Thus *S. Paul* brings this doctrine of the day of Judgment to practice. *2 Cor* 5. 10. *We must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.* So *S. Peter*, *2 Pet.* 3. 10. *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, and the Heavens shall pass away with a noise-----Seeing then these things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought we to be in all holy conversation?* Thus *Noah*, when he was warned of the Deluge, he was moved with fear, and prepared an Ark for the saving of himself: he asked no question, disputed not how it could be, that all the world should be drowned; but fell to building of an Ark for his preservation. How many are ready to dispute, How long it will be to the end of the world? and yet live so, as if it were but a meer dream and fable.

No, *Christ* shews us the right use of these truths; calls us to the moral, and practice part: As when one propounded a curious question to *Christ*, *Luke* 13. 23. *Lord, Are there few that shall be saved?* A strange Querie, *How many?* Mark *Christ's* answer to him; *Strive to enter in at the straight gate;* Few, or many, what is that to thee? strive thou to be one of them. As *S. Aug.* piously silenced that intricate Question, How original Sin is conveyed? Oh, saith he, Let us strive how to remove it. It were strange, when we see an house on fire, to stand questioning, how it kindled? No, let us bestir our selves and haste to quench it.

It is strange, in this so serious a business of the day of Judgment, which so nearly concerns us, how mens wits will busie themselves in many nice Enquiries (ye may meet with many such Questions in the School-men;) as,

1. How long to it?
2. In what place of the world, the judgment shall be held?
3. What kind of fire shall then be burning?

4. Whether *Christ* shall come with a Cross carried before him? As if Malefactors in the Jail, should fall a reasoning, and debating what weather it would be at the day of Assizes? or of the Judges habit and retinue? and never bethink themselves how to answer their Indictment, that they may escape condemnation. Oh, what *David* saith of his own days, let us say of that day of *Christ*; *Teach us, O Lord, so to reckon, and meditate of that day, that we may apply our hearts to Wisdom.* That is the first, *Vobis sciscitantibus.*

2. *Vobis vivis, & presentibus.* *Christ* gives this Caveat to his Disciples then alive, and present with him, and now long since dead, before the day of Judgment. *Christ*, by his divine knowledge, understood well enough that

Serm. 1. these men should die long before the end of the world, and yet he judged not this Caveat unseasonable for those times and men, and bids them take heed to themselves, lest that day surprize them.

Admit, this day overtook them not *de facto*; yet *de possibili*, and for ought they knew, it might have reached them, and laid hold on them. We are to judge of these events, not by enquiring into Gods secret Decree, but according to the order and likelihood of causes. The general spreadth, and ripeness of sin, when the *Regions look white, non tantum alba ad messem, sed arida ad ignem*, *Bern.* not like ripe Corn, ready to be reaped, but like drie Struble, fit to be burned; when the Harvest looks ready for the Sickle, when all flesh hath corrupted their ways; 'tis time then, Lord, to lay to thine hand. We must meditate upon that day, *Secundum exigentiam justitie*, not *secundum exigentiam decreti*. His Justice may now hasten it, though his patience delays it, and his secret purpose hath set to it a longer date.

Saint *Paul* speaks diversly of this day; sometimes he sets it forward, and sometimes backward; both to great purpose.

1. To those that would needs be calculating, and foretelling that day in a curious ungrounded speculation, to them he sets it backward, folds it up in obscurity, *2 Thes. 2. 1, 2. I beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye be not troubled, by Spirit, or by word, or by letter, as from us, as if the day of Christ were at hand*; as you love that day, so patiently wait for it; do not imagine it is now upon coming; There is his Caveat against a curious, ungrounded calculation. But then,

2. To quicken up our care, and preparation, he seems to hasten that day, and to set it forward. See how he speaks of himself, as if he look'd for that day, while he continued in the body, *1 Thes. 4. We that are alive, and remain to the coming of the Lord*. S. *Paul* put himself into the thoughts of seeing *Christ* coming; as S. *Hierom*, thought he heard the sound of the last Trumpet every day in his ears. Ey, this thought and expectation of it every day;

1. It is *Sancta cogitatio*; Oh, how will it damp our lusts, quicken our piety, keep our hearts in awe?

2. It is *Tuta cogitatio*; It is the safest way, to expect him too soon, than too late, and so to be surprized ere we be aware. He that said, *My Master, ἔσθι, defers his coming*, you know how it went with him.

3. It is *Officiosa cogitatio*; He purposely conceals it, that we may always expect it. Christians must be *Adversiores*. Servants appointed to meet their Master, whensoever he cometh.

4. It is *Vera cogitatio*; in the equivalence. The day of thy death, it is the day of thy judgment, then thy doom is past upon thee. It is all one for thee, whether thy trial be at the Quarter-Sessions, or be put off to the Grand Assizes.

To conclude this point of the fixed time of *Christs* coming to Judgment, S. *Aug.* makes the best resolution; and he lays it down in three assertions.

1. *Qui dicit citius venturum*; He that saith, the Lord will come speedily, he speaks most comfortably; *Even so come Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

2. *Qui dicit tardius venturum*; He that saith, it will be long ere he cometh, he in some sense speaks more warily; but,

3. He who saith, he knows not the certain time of his coming, but believes it firmly, desires it earnestly, expects it most watchfully, he speaks most soberly.

That is the second; *Vobis vivis, & presentibus.*

3. *Vobis discipulis, & credentibus*; You that are my Disciples, and Believers, holy, and sanctified men though justified, and so passed from death to life, yet, for all that, take heed to your selves, this Caveat concerns you.

1. *Dies*; The day of Judgment concerns you. And that not only the hopes, and comforts of that day; but the dread and terrour of it must deeply afflict you. *Nullus intrepidus vadit ad iudicium Domini, habens conscientiam peccatorum*

torum. Hier. Lib. 2. contra Pelagian. The Saints of God are to consider, and lay to heart, not only the Promises of God but his Comminations, and Threatnings also; Not only the hope of Heaven, but the fear of Hell also, must have its work on them. S. Paul reminds himself and other Christians of that dreadful Day; *We must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, Rom. 14. 10.* And Heb. 12. *Our God is a consuming fire,* Thus holy Job kept himself in awe; *Destruction from God was a terror to me, Job. 31. 23.* The thought of that day made him afraid. Moses at the giving of the Law, said, *I exceedingly fear and quake.* How should we tremble at the day of reckoning for the breaches of this Law?

2. *Morbus*; The danger of the distemper concerns them; they may fall into this disease Christ forwarns them of, *gravedo cordis*, the surcharge of the heart. Snares and Temptations may surprise them, if they look not to it. *Consider thy self.* (saith St. Paul, speaking to the spiritual man) *lest thou also be tempt. d.* Many a good Christian hath slumbred securely, and fallen into these sins that Christ gives warning of; if that day had then surprised them, it had been wo with them. Noah, Lot, David, how were they surcharged with the distemper of these sins? Warnings and Caveats, and earnest Exhortations, they are not unuseful, or unseasonable to the most holy men. They are *in tuto*, as long as they are in *canto*; no longer safe, than they are circumspect. The safety of a Christian from sin, it is like the safety of Men in a Ship, not like the safety of men on the Shore. Let the Ship be never so strong, if the Mariners slumber and sleep, watch not carefully; they may dash upon a Rock.

3. The mischief and miscarriage concerns them; if they look not to it, *That day may come upon them unawares*, and the sad sequels of it. The best Christians are liable to these surprisals, and so stand in need of these comminations, Rom. 8. Though S. Paul assures the true Believers, that, *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*; yet he thought it necessary to add this Caveat, Verse 13. *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.* The Promises of Heaven, and the Assurance of it, they hold only *in studio & praxi bonorum operum*. Hold on in the track of piety, and then lay hold on the Promises. But if thou turnest aside into the ways of iniquity, the threatnings then will lay hold on thee; and the day of Judgment will prove dismal to thee.

Now follows,

III. The greatness, and strictness of this heed, and caution to be used; that is expressed in this busie, and watchful word of circumspection, *μινπε, ne quando, lest at any time*; or else, *ne forte, lest upon any occasion*. It shews the great diligence and circumspection that is needful for us. A Christian must keep a constant watch over himself at all times, upon all occasions, and occurrents, lest these sins overtake, and surprize him.

Observe; It is not sufficient for a Christian, that he give not himself over to the full source and swindg of these sins of voluptuousness and worldliness, or settles himself in a course of security; but it concerns him to beware, lest occasionally he falls into these, and be overtaken by them. Indeed, to live and lie in them constantly, and purposely to make a practice and trade of them, it cannot stand with any piety. It is the character and badg of a wicked man, wilfully and habitually to give himself over to these sinful practices.

1. For security; Their hearts are always surcharged, benumbed, brawnie. They study how to be secure, they put the evil day far from them, as the Prophet speaks. Either they persuade themselves there will be no day of judgment at all, *The Lord will do neither good nor evil*, say they in *Z. ph. 1. 12.* They can frame arguments to disprove this truth of Christ's coming to Judgment, 2. Pet. 3. 4. *Where is the promise of his coming?* Prophane Man! What talkest thou of Promises? 'Tis a threatening to thee. Well! but hear what they say. *All things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation*, and so are all like to do. Or else they will set back the expectation of it for many years hence, they look not to see it in their days;

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—*Mancat nostros ea cura nepotes,*

Let the Ages to come fear that day. This was the prophane-ness of the Jews in *Ezekiel's* time ; when he Prophesied of an evil day, Tush, they put it off with a jest, *Ezek. 12. 22.* It was grown a Proverb among them ; *The days, say they, are prolonged, and every vision fails ; they say, The vision he sees is for many days to come, he prophesies of the times that are afar off ;* and so they settle themselves in a course of security. And so,

2. For Voluptuousness, they give over themselves to that too. It is a carnal mans constant practice, *Ephes. 4. 19. Being past feeling, they give themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.* Thus *Isaiah* describes them, *Chap. 46. 12. Come, we will fetch Wine, and fill our selves with strong drink, and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant. Let us eat and drink, for to morrow (forsooth) we shall die, if ye will believe the Prophet ;* scorning the threatnings of that day. And then,

3. For the cares of this life (which is the third Ingredient into this *gravedo cordis*, this *cardiac passion*, this surcharge of the heart) the Men of this world, they are overwhelmed with them. It is their constant trade ; *Their heart goes after their covetousness, Ezek. 33. 31. They all look to their own way, every one for his gain, Isai. 56. 11.* The world is set in the midst of their hearts, as *Solomon* speaks ; 'tis all they mind. As *S. James* describes them, *Go to, let us go to such a City, and continue there, and buy and sell, and get gain.*

Thus you see the Condition of wicked Men ;

1. Constantly secure.
2. Studiously voluptuous.
3. Wholly given over to the world, and covetous practices ; No marvel if destruction come suddenly upon such.

But a Christian must not only abstain from such wilful and habitual courses of sin, but must take heed of being in any degree at any time overtaken and surprised with them. *Blessed is the Man that feareth always, Prov. 28. 14.* It is not sufficient for him, that he is able to say ; God, I thank thee, I am not as common worldlings, I am no usual glutton, or drunkard, or all for the World, or prophanely secure ; I believe the Day of Judgment, and when I say over my Creed, I think of it ; I fast sometimes, and take off my self from my Wordly affairs : that is not all, that is requir'd of a Christian ; he must be more exact and circumspect. He must not only not wilfully rush into these sins, but take heed, lest by any oversight he slips and stumbles, and falls into them. It is not sufficient that these sinful distempers be not like an Hectic Fever, always upon him ; but he must shun any one fit, be afraid of the least grudgings and inclinations to them.

Consider, these Distempers are stealing, and lie evils, they will easily grow upon us.

1. Security is an encroaching sin. What though thou dost not give over thy self to security, not lie down to sleep, wrap thy self up, shut the windows, draw the curtains, repose thy self upon the bed and pillow of covetousness ; but yet how soon mayst thou slumber and take a nap of security ?

2. The Sins here that occasion this Security, they are slippery and gliding, and insinuating Sins. Voluptuousness and sensual Pleasure will strangely grow upon thee, if thou be not vigilant. *Noah* and *Lot*, and *David*, were strangely overtaken with these sins. And for the World, though the Scripture affords not a Saint tainted with that sin, yet 'tis full of insinuations, and allurements. Wordly Cares are dangerous Snares. They are called, *deceitful Riches*.

3. *Gravedo cordis* ; the dulness of the heart, it is a disease that the Saints are subject to, if they take not heed. As it is in bodily sleep ; *Peter*, and *James*, and *John*, they were oppressed with sleep at two most remarkable times ;

1. In *Splendore Transfigurationis* ; upon the Mount of *Christs* glorious Transfiguration, then they fell asleep.
2. In *Horrore Passionis* ; In the Garden of *Christs* Agony, then again they

they fell asleep; So, if the best look not to it, this deadness and hardness of heart will grow upon them. Naturally we are exceeding subject to this spiritual Lethargy. How soon did the Disciples grow dull and stupid, even to the forgetting of Miracles? *They forgot the Miracle of the Loaves, for their hearts were hardened, Mar. 6. 59.*

4. This duty of attention, and heedfulness, is exceeding hard. As it was to *Elisba* a matter of great diligence to have his Eye still upon *Elias*, to see him taken away, and carried up into Heaven; so it is for us, to be always looking upwards, *взвѣсивъ*, still waiting to expect *Christ's* Coming to us. And therefore this duty of attention, it is compared not only to the waking of the day (he is a sluggard that will sleep then;) but to the watching of the Night. 'Tis hard to hold open our Eyes all night without much attention.

This, this Circumspection, it is needful; and that holy care and jealousy which this word *μίσος* puts upon us, must shew it self in a threefold Caution.

1. It must make us watch over our own inclinations. Take heed, lest thy heart betray thee. Though thou beest not under the dominion of these sins; yet thou mayst have a proneness and inclination to them. The seeds of those evils, are in our nature. Inbred Concupiscence is as the *materia prima* to all sorts of sins, susceptible of any unlawful Impression. The Spirit that is in thee, may be willing, but the flesh is weak, nay willful too.

2. It must make us watch over Satans temptations. Take heed of them. Art thou not given to these sins of Voluptuousness, and Covetousness; yet if thou look not to thy self, Satan may surprize thee by some temptation. *Consider thy self*, saith St. Paul, *lest thou be tempted*. Let our hearts seem never so empty of these sins, Satan can fill our hearts with these lusts, as he did to *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Why hath Satan filled your hearts with covetousness?* *Act 5. 3.* Though thy heart be not *habitaculum* for Satans temptations; yet it may prove *hospitium*.

3. We must watch over all occasions. Take heed of them; shun not only these sins, but the occasions that may bring thee unto them: As *Solomon* speaks of unlawful haunts, *Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, come not near it*. He that fears a distemper will forbear all meats that may dispose him to it. A wise Man will not only shun poyson, but all unwholesome meats: Even lawful Liberty, lawful Company, lawful Employments must be warily used.

So much of the Caveat; Come we,

Secondly, to the Distemper to be avoided: And in it

1. The Causes that breed it: And then,

2. The Disease it self, *Gravedo cordis*.

The Causes that breed this surcharge, are three,

1. Surfeiting.

2. Drunkenness.

3. The cares of this life.

And then the Enquiry must be,

1. Why doth *Christ* so forewarn them against these sins?

2. Why, especially, with reference to the day of Judgment?

The Scripture tells us, there are other great sins, that will reign and prevail in the World about that time. Infidelity, which is Atheism against the Gospel, that will then prevail; *When the Son of Man comes, shall he find Faith on the Earth?* *Luke 18. 9.* Want of Charity, that will then abound in the World; *The Charity of many shall then wax cold*, *Matth. 24.* Apostasie, giving over Religion, Antichristianism and Idolatry, and corruption in Religion, that shall prevail in the World, at *Christ's* coming, *2. Thes. 2.* 'Tis true; these, and many outrageous sins shall prevail then, *Iniquity shall then abound*, *Matth. 24.* but yet we see *Christ* forewarns them especially of these evils in the Text.

I. Why so?

1. These sins of Voluptuousness and Worldly-mindedness, they are more natural to us. Heresie, and Idolatry, and Blood, and Oppression, men are not so prone to these; but to be overtaken with excess in pleasures and profits, our nature is exceeding subject to these evils.

2. As

Serm. I.

2. As they are more natural, so these sins are most general, and universal. Outragious villanies, many will abstain from them; but all the World almost is taken either with Voluptuousness or Covetousness. He is counted a strange Monster among Men that is not addicted and given to pleasures. *Wisdom* says *St. Peter*, 1. *Pet.* 4. 4. *They think it strange, a Man runs not with them into excess and riot.* John came neither eating nor drinking, and they counted him a Devil; Otherwise he would have done as other men did, and plaid the good-fellow. Survey the whole World, and all, almost, are taken with one of these two. Young men, they are for Pleasures; old Men, they are for Profits. They will haunt the same Man in a Succession; as when a Quartane leaves him, he falls into a Dropsie (*Hydropicam habent conscientiam*); so, when Pleasures forsakes him, Covetousness lays hold upon him.

3. These are such sins as Professors of Religion will venture upon. They will be no Hereticks, no Idolaters, nor yet unnatural Monsters; but security, and tasting too much of pleasures, and profits Men that would be counted for good Christians, will be overtaken with them. Thus in the old World, the Sons of God, the true Worshippers, fell by Voluptuousness. *S. Paul* tells us of loose-living Christians, *Whose God is their belly, and that mind earthly things.*

4. These sins *Christ* forewarns them of, as being unworthy and unsuitable with the Faith, and Hope, and Religion of Christians. The prevailing of these sins, wrung tears from *S. Paul*. *I tell you weeping, they are Enemies to the Cross of Christ.* Enemies to his Cross, *Christ's* Religion, it is a Religion of Sobriety and Moderation. When the World offers us these delights and profits, we should answer as *Christ* did, when they offer'd him meat, *I have other meat, which you know not of:* So should a Christian say, We have other pleasures and treasures, which the World knows not of, which our Religion affords us. Ey, but *Christ's* Cross, that's of the greatest force to mortifie these sins. Christians profess they serve a crucified God (*Sub spinato capite, membra delicata!*) That Cross should crucifie us to the World, *Gal.* 6. and make us die to it. Lovers of pleasures, more than lovers of God; What a great indignity is that to our Religion? And for worldly-mindedness, our Saviour tells us plainly, 'tis inconsistent with piety, *Mat.* 6. 24. *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.* O yes! We can mind the World, and Gods service too: Such quick and large parted Men there are, that can deal in divers businesses. Well, *Christ* tells us, *We cannot serve two Masters.*

1. It will breed a distraction. God requires this service of thee, the World will forbid it: God saith, *Relieve the poor*; No, Spare thy purse, saith the World: God saith, Set daily some time apart to pray to thy God, and to mind thy Soul; No, the World saith, Thou canst not spare so much time, thou hast other business. It will breed distraction.

2. *Christ* adds, *Thou must love the one and hate the other*; that is more than a distraction: it implies a contrariety: We cannot serve two at all, much less two that are in contrariety and enmity: So is God and the World. *The love of the World, is enmity to God*, *Jam.* 4. 4. *Demas hath forsaken me, and loved this present World*, *2 Tim.* 4. If you love the World, you must hate God. Will a Man abide such a Servant that shall live in his house, and yet hold a close correspondency with his utter Enemy? mind his affairs, and leave his Masters undone: O, but we may bear good-will to both; No, therefore saith *Christ*,

3. *You must cleave to the one and despise the other.* If you serve the World, you must cleave to it, addict your selves wholly to it, neglect, despise God. Serving, loving, cleaving to the World, all these will not suffer us to apply our selves to God and the World too.

II. *Christ* principally forewarns them of these Sins, with a special reference, and eye to the day of Judgment; and that for three causes:

1. These sins of Voluptuousness and Worldliness, they are *Peccata praecurrentia*: The prevailing of these sins are a certain prognostick of that day; these sins will then over-spread the World. There are in Scripture two great Judgments,

Judgments, which *Christ* and *St. Peter* make types and resemblances of the day of Judgment. And *Christ* notes these sins, as the symptoms and fore-runners of this Judgment: *Serm. I.*

1. He instances in the Deluge, and Flood, that drowned the old VWorld. See what *Christ* saith of that. *Matth. 24. 37.* As the days of Noah were; so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not till the Flood came, and took them all away, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.
2. He instances in the Overthrow of Sodom. *Christ* makes that a type of the day of Judgment. VWhat saith he of that? *Luke 17. 28.* As it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded, and then it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all; so shall it be in the day of *Christ*.

See here the practices that *Christ* instances in: In the old VWorld, eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage: So in Sodom, they ate and drank, they bought and sold, builded and planted. VVhy, the Scripture charges both those times and places, with far greater sins.

1. The old World is charged with blood and violence, and heavy oppressions. Men lived like Giants, oppressing and devouring others; That is a crying sin: So,
2. Sodom is charged with other kind of sins of unnatural abominations. Yet observe, *Christ* instanceth not in the oppressions and violence of the old world, nor in the abominations of Sodom, but in their eating, and drinking, and buying, and selling, and driving after the VWorld; to teach us, That when the world comes to this state and condition, to be voluptuous and covetous; let their voluptuousness be natural eating and drinking, and the enjoyment of Marriage; let their covetousness be without oppression, they bought and they sold, traded fairly, paid for what they took; yet a secure giving over our selves to these courses, is a fore-runner of judgment. As some sickness (*Morbi symptomatici*) are more fearful, not in themselves, but because they are fore-runners of Plague and Pestilence; so are these sins dreadful. VVhen the VWorld lies in them, in a careless security; when Men say, *Peace and Safety*; every Man cheers up his neighbour, Be not afraid, all shall be well, then shall come upon them sudden destruction, 1 *Thes.*
3. The Meteor, called *Malacia*, it is a certain sign of a storm and tempest.
2. These sins, they are *Peccata accelerantia*; when these sins are over-spreading, come to a ripeness, and predominancy, they do not only foretel, and prognosticate, but they hasten the days of Judgment, and bring it upon the World. And so they are more considerable. Bare signs, are not to be neglected. But these sins are not only ominous signs, but effectual provocations, and speeders of judgment. *S. Paul* tells *Timothy*, that these sins will make the last times perilous times, 2 *Tim. 3. 1.* 2. This know also, that in the last days, perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves covetous——— lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: these and the like sins, will be dangerous sins; make perilous times; expose the World to vengeance; provoke judgment. Should we see the Sun darkned, the Heavens to tremble, the Stars to fall, the Sea to roar, it would make us to look about us: Why, to see the World drown'd in voluptuousness, and security, and greediness of gain, loving pleasures, and profits, more than God; to a spiritual man, are indeed more fearful: Those only foretel; these hasten, and ripen, and pull down vengeance and judgment.

3 *Christ* bids us beware of these sins, respectively to the day of Judgment because these sins, they are *Derisoria Judicii*; they will beget a profane spirit of deriding, & scoffing at the day of Judgment. Voluptuousness, that is a mocker: *Solomon* tells us so, *Prov. 20.* And Covetousness, that is a mocker too:

Luke

Serm. I. *Luke 16. 14. All these things heard the Pharisees, which were covetous, and they derided him. And Security, that is a mocker too: They mocked Gods Messengers, saying securely, These things shall hapen to themselves.*

No doubt *Noah* had many a flout put upon him for talking of the Deluge, and building his Ark. So *Zot's* sons-in-law made but a jest of the tidings of destruction. *Zot* seemed as one that mock'd. And the threatnings of Captivity were but derided by the secure ones in *Isaiah's* time; *Zet him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it.* And, answerably, *S. Peter* tells us there will be mockers at the last day; *There will come at the last, scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and say, Where is the promise of his Coming?* 2 *Pet.* 3. 3. And mocking, that is a most dismal provoker of judgment. Trembling at threatnings even in *Ahab*, did set back Gods judgments; but mocking and deriding Gods threatnings, that hastens judgments. Take but two places for it:

1. One place is, 2 Chron. 36. 16. *They mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his threatnings, until the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, till there was no remedy. Salvation it self could not save such.*
2. Another place is, *Isai. 22. 13. In that day the Lord did call to weeping, and mourning,——and behold, joy, and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine; Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye: yes, I warraunt you, that was their Song. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged till they dye.* He would not be merciful to such Voluptuous, Sensual, Secure Mockers.

S E R M O N

On Gen. 4. 3, 4, 5.

And in process of time, it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord.

And Abel, he brought also of the firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof, and the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering:

But unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect, and Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.



His Story which we have now entred upon, is the first relation that the Scripture makes of any publick Worship that by Man-kind was offered up to God. And so it carries with it a Type and Representation of the Practise of Religion, which in succession of times should be used, and performed, in the Church of Christ.

And this solemn Service, it is observable, and exemplary in divers respects;

1. In the Condition of the Persons that perform this Service. Who were they? *Cain*, and *Abel*, both Husbandmen, *Cain* a Tiller of the ground, *Abel* a Keeper of Sheep, Verse 2.

1. These two, though the first-born Patriarchs of Mankind, though the Heirs of the World, yet were they brought up in a plain, honest, laborious Calling.

2. Though their Profession were secular, yet they accounted the matters of God, and duties of Religion, no impertinent things to them, but they were trained up in the knowledge of God, and duties of Religion, and esteemed it a main part of their duty, to be conversant in it. The Worship of God is not peculiar to any one sort of men, as prophane men think it; Let Church-men mind the Duties of the Church, let them attend the Worship of God that live by it. No, Piety is a common duty, binding every State, Order, and Condition of men to a constant performance.

2. The season and age of the Church, in which this Worship was performed, makes it more exemplary;

1. It was not in the time and state of Innocency before the Fall, but, it was after man-kind had sinned; and that's one Condition.

2. It was after Christ, and his Gospel was promised, and preached to man-kind; and so, for the substance, this Worship was Evangelical, and instructs us Christians; and,

3. As it was after the Fall, so it was before the Law of *Moses*, not merely Ritual, and Ceremonial, and peculiar to one people, but practised under the Law of Nature, undertaken by these two Patriarchs; and so may serve for a direction to all man-kind after them.

3. This Story, 'tis the more memorable, and worthy of our consideration, as carrying with it an intimation of three things observable.

1. This Story shews us, *Antiquitatem Ecclesie*, the venerable antiquity, and old-age of the Church, and Worship of God. It appears by this story, that Religion is no late upstart invention, set up in the world by some politick men,

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to keep people in awe (as Atheists judge of it.) We cannot say of it, *Tempus erat, quando non erat*; From the beginning it was not so. No, the Church is as old as the World. Religion is of the same date, and standing with the Creation. God imprinted the sense of Religion into the heart of *Adam*, and this print was not fully defaced by his fall. And God renewed, and restored it soon again, established a Church presently, instituted a Religion, and Worship of him self.

Of all other sins, Atheism is of a latter-birth. We read of Lust, and Cruelty, and Blood-shed, soon after Creation, but not of Atheism. The Devil could not so soon quench the knowledge of God out of the minds of men. No; Creation, and Religion; the World, and the Church, are both Twins of the same continuance. And the one was the end of the other. God made the World, not only for us to live, and labour in, but to worship and adore him in it. The World was not only intended to be *ergasterium*, but *intheum*, not a Work-house only, but an *House of Prayer*. That's the first thing observable.

2. This Story shews us, *Mixturam Ecclesie*; the mixed temper and composition of the Church, even from the beginning. *Cain*, an *Abel* are here the Church, Representative. And who were they? Indeed, both worshippers of God in outward profession, but yet *Cain* was a false-hearted, unsound, hypocritical man, a wicked ungodly man under the mask of Religion.

Observe, as there was never any time, when there was not a Church, so there was never any Church free from this mixture of good and bad; of sound and substantial Christians, and false-hearted professors. *Adhuc Arca continet Corvum, & Columbam. Aug. Eq. 145.* Clean and unclean Birds, the Dove and the Raven, are both in the Ark, and house of God. Those holy Families of the Patriarchs, were so many Churches; the speech of *S. Paul* agrees to them, *The Church that is in their house*; yet in these holy Families, you may find this mixture of good and bad. In *Adam's* Family, there was holy *Abel*, and wicked *Cain*; in *Noah's* Family, there was blessed *Sem*, and cursed *Cham*; in *Abraham's* Family, there was devout *Isaac*, and ungodly *Ishmael*; in *Isaac's* Family, there was religious *Jacob*, and profane *Esau*; yea, in *Christ's* own Family there was a *Judas*, a Son of perdition. In this Net of the Church, there are Fish good, and bad, *Matth. 13. 47.* In this Field of the Church, there grows Wheat, and Tares, *Matth. 13. 38.* In this Floor of the Church, there is good Corn, and Chaff, *Matth. 3.* There must be, *Agri concretio*, before there be, *Messis discretio. Aug.* We must stay till the day of purging and winnowing comes; the day of separation shall sever the Goats from the Sheep; till then, they feed together in the same Pasture, and make up one visible Flock. Before that day come, he who would be free from the society of wicked men, must go out of the Church, and out of the World too.

3. This Story shews us, *Discordias Ecclesie*. It lets us see the fruits and success of quarrels, and discontents, that arise about matters of Religion, and Worship of God. Here are two Brothers, of a near and dear relation: Twins they were, (as some conceive them) both of the same birth; and yet see, here a discontent arises in point of God's Worship. *Abel's* worship is allowed, *Cain's* disallowed by God, and that works an alienation in *Cain* from his Brother *Abel*. Yea, more than so, it works a bitter hatred and opposition, it breaks out to murder. Difference and dissentions in matters of Religion, and Worship of God, are of all others most outrageous, and deadly; If the Israelites espy an Altar erected, as they conceive, against their Altar, they arm themselves presently to make a warr with their brethren, *Josh. 22.* These quarrels will make the Father betray the Son, and the Son the Father; Brother shall betray Brother to death, *Mark 13. 12.* O, differences in Religion, are of most dangerous consequence, What said *Moses* to *Pharaoh*? *Shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians, and will they not stone us? Exod. 8. 26.* When one man's Religion is another man's Abomination, it will beget bitter envies, and strife, and bring confusion, and every evil work, as *S. James* speaks, *Chap. 3. 16.*

For the words themselves, they set out unto us a solemn Service and Worship of

of God, performed by these two brethren, *Cain* and *Abel*. And in it observe these two things; Serm. I.

1. Is the Performance of the Worship, *Vers. 3*. They both brought their Offerings to the Altar of God; then,

2. Is the Success of this their service, and worship, what acceptance it found with God; that is expressed in *vers. 4.* and *5.* God respected *Abels* Sacrifice, but to *Cains* Oblation he gave no regard.

First, The performance of this Service is considerable,

1. In the circumstance of time, when it was tendered; that's said to be, *In process of time*.

2. 'Tis considerable in the substance of their Service.

I. It was, *In process of time*. And this circumstance of time thus expressed, admits of a double construction;

1. It may be taken indefinitely. *In process of time*, that is, after many days, so some understand it; after much time had passed over their heads, many revolutions, then they sacrificed. And so it shews us *Lentum progressum Religionis*; the leisurely, slow growth and progress of Religion: Gods worship, and Service, comes but slowly forward in the World. The seed of Religion, sow it never so timely (as no question *Adam* did in his Sons) comes up very late, above all other seeds that are sown into men.

See, these two are their crafts-masters in their secular Trades and Professions; *Abel* a Shepherd, *Cain* an Husband-man, expert in those mysteries, but their Profession of Religion comes after many days. The Trade of Religion is long a learning. After our fall, man is become but an auk Creature for any discipline, very unteachable; but above all, most untoward, and dull to receive Religious instruction. Line after line and precept after precept, much planting, and watering, and yet but slow increase. Ye account it an unkindly year, when ye receive no more than your seed again; and that untimely, in a backward Harvest. It were well with us, if we could see our seed again. *Thick sown, and thin come up*, argues a bad soil, and it is near unto cursing as the Apostle speaks. He who sets himself to gain men to Religion, is like him who goes to make a fire of green wood; much a-do there is, to make it take fire, and it is soon out again. How may God justly expostulate with us, that He is last served, who should have the precedency? Where is thy Morning-Sacrifice? Nay, where is thine Even-Sacrifice? In matters of Religion, how are ye Children in understanding? whereas in matters of the World, ye are men of a ripe age. That's the first construction.

2. *In process of time*; take it word for word, 'tis, At the end of days. And so it imports a more definite, and determinate circumstance of time; *At the end of days*, that is, at the just revolution of days; at the end of the year. So *1 Sam. 2. 9*. The sacrifice of days was the yearly Sacrifice. And so it betokens a set solemn time, appointed, and appropriated to the Worship of God by publick Sacrifice; and it was at the years end; and that, by the best computation, and most natural, was at the end of Harvest. That was the beginning of the year by the civil computation, as being, most likely, the beginning of the World. The World was created in Autumn, when the fruits of the Earth were ripe, and mature. This was the time, in all probability, when these men sacrificed.

Set, solemn times for the Worship of God, are of ancient, and useful appointment; especially this Sacrifice of the seventh Moneth, was in most solemn manner to be performed to God, with thanks for his blessings, having gathered in their fruits. 'Tis here practised by *Cain*, and *Abel*. It was after, commanded by God, *Exod. 23. 16*. *The feast of Harvest, the first-fruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field, and the feast of In-gathering, which is at the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. — then thou shalt appear before the Lord with a Sacrifice.* And this Law was so strict, that men might not taste of their fruits, till this Service was performed. *Lev. 23. 14*. *Ye shall neither eat Bread, nor parched Corn, nor green Ears, until the same day that ye have brought an Offering unto your God.* God will be first served, and our recognition-Sacrifice,

Serm. I. the tribute and homage we owe him, must be perform'd ere we put forth our hand to taste of his blessings.

God justly challenges this at our hands, as being our great Landlord; we are but his Tenants, *Levit. 25. 23.* There ye may see our Tenure of what we possess. *The land is mine, saith God, Ye are but strangers, and sojourners with me.* How well doth it become us, to present our selves, and tender our Sacrifice of thanks to our God? This Service was not merely Judaical, appointed only by *Moses*; the very Heathens pitch'd upon this practice. They had their *Saxina*, and their *Cerealia festa post fruges comportatas*. *Aristotle* speaks of it, that after Harvest they offered up a solemn Sacrifice. And the great Law-giver of Religion amongst the Romans, *Numa*, strictly forbid any to taste of new Corn, or Wine, till the Sacrifice was past, and the Priest had received Gods appointed portion. 'Tis a shame for us Christians, to be so backward in this Service, and to suffer Gentiles, and Pagans to outgo and exceed us.

So much for the circumstance of time. Come we now,

II. To the Substance of this Service, and religious performance. And of it, we may take a double consideration.

1. Let us look upon this Service and Sacrifice of these two men in common; and then,

2. We shall see the difference 'twixt them in the second Part of the Text, in the success, and acceptance God gave to them.

This Service, and Worship of *Cain*, and *Abel*, look upon them both together, they agree in these five Particulars, to be noted in them.

1. It was *Personalis cultus*; each of them in his own Person performs this Service, and Worship to God; *Cain* hath his Offering, and *Abel* hath his. Here is one observable point of Religion, and take notice of it; the performance of religious Worship to God, is a duty that binds every man in Person. These men, they put it not off to their Father *Adam*, they rest not in any other mans devotion, but they take themselves bound personally to appear before God, and Worship him. No man can Worship God by a Proxie. He who will serve God by a Proxie, must look to go to Heaven by a Deputy. No, the duty of Piety binds every Soul. As *David* saith, *No man can make an atonement to God for his Brother.* We can neither buy, nor borrow this Oyl of our Brethren; we must all have it ready in our own Vessels. Thus *Moses* answers *Pharaoh*, *We will go with our young, and with our old, nor an Assloof must be left behind.* That Soul that neglects to keep the Passover, must be cut off from Gods People. So strict was the Law for the Worship of God, *Exod. 34. 23.* every man must appear before God, to perform this Worship. Every Soul, from a month, and upward, were to offer to the Lord, in token of their redemption, *Numb. 18. 16.* If any man can exempt himself from being Gods vassal, and liege-man by Creation, he may deny his homage. If any can plead his innocency, that he stands not in need of redemption, he may neglect his Atonement by Sacrifice. If any man can say, he stands not in need of a daily supply of blessings, he may give over his daily prayers. If any man can alledge he owes nothing to God, that God hath not been aforehand with him, in mercy and goodness, he may omit his service of thankfulness.

2. A second thing observable in this joynt-worship of *Caine* and *Abel*, is, *Rectitudo cultus*; 'tis a true, warrantable, and lawful Worship that was performed by them.

1. It was a Worship directed and performed to the true God, an invocation of *Jehovah*. Not only *Abel*, but *Cain* brought his Offering to the Lord; And,

2. It was *Cultus legitimus*; such a Worship as was prescribed, no superstitious Worship invented by themselves, but taught by Revelation, received by Prophetical Instruction, such as we see God allowed by after-approbation. These Brethren were not like *Aaron's Sons*, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, they offer no strange fire to God, but proceed by rule and direction.

This way of worship, *Abel* learn'd it from *Adam*. *Adam*, he was taught

it of God, and taught it his Children, faith *Pererius*. Inventions of Gods Worship are but Superstitions. That God is to be Worshipped, even Nature teaches us; but how he is to be Worshipped, He alone must direct us. As *Moses* said to *Pharaoh*, *Exod. 10. 26. We know not with what we must serve the Lord till we come thither*, and he teach us.

Indeed, the times when *Cain* and *Abel* offered, were Primitive Times, the Form of Religion was not yet degenerate and corrupted: Idolatry, and the setting up of false Gods, and false Worship, were not yet crept into the Church. It is the dignity of true Religion, it hath the Precedency of all, before Idolatry and Superstition. Idolatry, is a *post-natus* to Religion, of an after-birth. The Field was first sown with good Seed, the envious man came afterwards and sowed his Tares, *Matth. 13.* Idolatry, it is a Super-femination. *Id verum, quod prius; id falsum & adulterinum, quod posterius, Tertul.* True Religion hath the Birth-right, pleads Prescription before all false Worships. *Christ* in his Reformation brings the Jews back to that which was first, *Ab initio non fuit sic*; checks all Superstitions with this Exception, *It was not so from the beginning.* It is our Plea, Where was Invocation of Saints, and Angels, or Worship of Images? Did *Moses*, or *Abraham*, or *Abel*, so Worship? No, it was the malice of Satan that sowed these Tares, foisted in these Corruptions. Purposely God kept Religion untainted in the beginning of the World? Though a deluge of other sins brake early into the World, Cruelty, and Lust, and Violent Oppression; yet Idolatry was kept out, that the very novelty of it might make it suspected.

3. A third thing observable in this Worship of *Cain* and *Abel* is *Unitas Cultus*, their joynt brotherly consent and unity in their Worship of God. As they were Twins in their Birth, so, as Twins, they joyn hand in hand to compass Gods Altar. We read not of an Altar that *Cain* erected, and another that *Abel* set up apart for himself; but as they were of the same Family, and natural Fraternity, so they joyn as Members of the same Church, as to pertaining to the same Altar.

The Jews conceive, it was all one place, where *Adam* Sacrificed, and now his Sons; and after, *Noah*, Though they go too far when they say, it was where *Abraham* Sacrificed *Isaac*; and after, *David* Sacrificed; and where after, *Solomon* built the Temple, and erected the Altar. Surely Concord in the Worship of God, 'tis most necessary and comely. Without these two, Truth, and Unity, God accepts no service. Truth and Peace are the Supports of Religion. Thus *S. Peter*, forbidding discord, and commending to Christians domestick Peace, presses this reason for it, *That your prayers be not hindered, 1 Pet. 3. 7.* Discord breeds Distraction in holy duties. Quarrelling and Contention, it is the bane of Devotion. See how uncomely was *Aaron* and *Miriam's* quarrelling with *Moses*, *Num. 12.* What Disturbance did it breed in the publick affairs of the people of *Israel*? It hindered their Progress into the Land of *Canaan*, and set it back. 'Tis said the people journeyed not till *Miriam* was brought in again, and the breach made up again. So, on the contrary, what a gracious promise doth *Christ* make to Prayers made in the Spirit of Unity; *Matth. 18. 19. If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.*

These two Brothers here, they came in Unity. They had one God, one Altar, one kind of Service by Sacrifice; one Time too; and no doubt they came in one Affection; the grudge grew afterwards. See with how many Bonds, *S. Paul* labours to continue Christians together in an holy Concord, *Eph. 4. 5. There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, one Body, one Spirit, one hope of our calling, therefore keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* Christians must say, *We are all one mans Children.* Our cognizance is Love, and Unity, and Concord. The quarrels and contentions, that did arise amongst Christians, 'twas a great hinderance to the Conversion of the Gentiles. When they could not answer the Christians Arguments, then they objected the Contentions of Christians, that they could not agree amongst themselves. *Hoc est Opprobrium,*

Serm. I. *brium Gentium*, saith S. Augustine, *Non consentitis*. The Gentiles cast that in their Teeth, that there was not Concord, and Unity amongst them. That's the third.

4. A fourth thing observable in these two Brethrens Worship of God, it was *Cultus cum sumptu*. They did not put off God with empty shews, but they are at charge here in the Worship of God, they can be content to be at cost in honouring of him according to their state, and condition. *Cain*, he is an Husbandman, he brings of the Fruit of the Ground to honour God with, a Sacrifice of Corn. *Abel*, he is a Shepherd, he brings his Offerings of the Herd and Flock. Nature it self teacheth us this Truth. If there be a God, then sure he must be Worshiped and that Worship must be maintained, though with cost, and charges. 'Tis a spice of Atheism, to say as *Pharaoh* did, *Go ye your selves and worship God, but let your Flocks alone*; as S. Augustine complains of the wealthy men in his time, they would be Rich at Home, but poor at Church; they would leave their Purfes at home that they might not be at charge for any Church-contribution; *Leave your Flocks behind you*. No, saith *Moses*, we must have them with us, *Of them we must offer a Sacrifice to our God*. This *Solomon* commands us, *Honour God with thy substance, and the first-fruits of thine increase*. *Prov. 3. 9.* And he learnt it of his Father, *David*, he chose to be at cost in serving of God, *2 Sam. 24. 24. I will not serve the Lord with that which cost me nothing*.

Thus doing, we honour our God; ey, and we honour our selves, and our substance too. The Jewes knew how to prevail with *Christ*, for the good Centurion: *He loves our Nation*, nay he loves our Religion, *and hath built us a Synagogue*. As *Origen* discoursing of the liberal Contribution for the erecting of the Tabernacle, *Quam gloriosum erit?* saith he; How great an honour is it, that it shall be said, This mans Gold made the Ark? This mans Silver made the Pillars and Sockets for them? This mans Wealth furnisht the Tabernacle? And it is also an honour to our Wealth to be thus employed. As *Protarchus* in *Aristotle* said, Those Stones were happy Stones of which Altars were made. Sure, 'tis an happy employment of what God gives to us, that we give something of it again to God to maintain his Worship.

Superstition spares for no cost, and shall Religion be close-handed? The Jewes that lavish'd out their Gold Ear-rings, and Jewels, to make the Golden Calf, were afterwards as forward to contribute their Gold and Silver for the Ark and Tabernacle. Our Christian Worship, it is more spiritual than that of the Jewes, but that discharges us not of this duty. God's Houfe, his Ministers, the Provision for his Worship, they must be supported, and honourably supplied.

This is strange doctrine to the World. We count nothing too mean, too homely for the Service of God. If we remove the Ark, put it in a Cart; if we give place to it, lodge it in a Cottage. That Religion is best, we think, that is best-cheap.

5. A fifth thing observable is, that it was *Cultus per sacrificium*, a publick Worship by solemn Sacrifice, a consuming, and burning upon Gods Altar their Gifts and Oblations. Burnt-offering and Sacrifice, was the most awful, and solemn Worship, the Church offered up to God before *Christ*. *Moses* gives Rules and Canons for this Service. Nay as *Christ* saith of Circumcision, we may say of Sacrifice, *It was not of Moses, but of the Fathers*; all from *Adam*, and downwards, *Abel, Noah, Abraham*, and the rest of the Patriarchs abounded in this Service. And it carries with it these significations.

1. It was a real Recognition and acknowledgment of Gods Sovereign Dominion, and of their Dependency and Subjection to him. *Mittite agnum dominatori terræ; Isai. 16. 7. Send ye a Lamb, to the Ruler of the Land*, as a Sacrifice of Homage and Subjection.
2. It was a sad Remembrance and acknowledgment of sin, and of the due debt, and just desert of death by sin. The slaying of the Sacrifice was a confession, that they deserved death and destruction.

3. It was a Protestation, and Profession of their Faith in *Christ*, the great Atonement to be offered for them, the true Lamb of God, the great whole burnt-Offering to satisfy for sin. *Serm. 1.*

4. They were Testimonies and Professions of humble thankfulness for mercies received.

But then the Inquiry must be, Where is our Christian-Sacrifice? Have not Christians something to offer, and sacrifice to God?

I answer, These carnal and external Sacrifices of Beasts, belong all to the Law of Ceremonies, and so cease now, and are out of date. *Christ* hath put an end to them. The Salt that did season their Sacrifices was Gods Institution, now they want that Salt, and so they corrupt and putrifie. The Mannah that was kept longer than Gods appointment, bred Worms, and corrupted; such now are all Jewish Sacrifices. Now they are no sweet savour, but a loathsome stench in the Nostrils of God.

But then, have Christians no Sacrifice?

Yes verily. The sum and substance of those Sacrifices is compleat in *Christ*. He is the only Priest, and Sacrifice of the New Testament. He offered up himself once for all; He gave himself as an Offering, and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour, *Eph. 5. 2.* A Sacrifice of that efficacy, that it need not be offered often; yet was once offered, and is for ever effectual. *S. Chrysostom* compares the Jewish Sacrifices to weak Plaisters, that must be often renewed. *Christ's* blood was like a Sovereign Plaster, *Semel impositum, semper sanat*; once applied, it perfectly cures us.

But yet, though we have now no proper Sacrifice external, and bodily, yet we have still our Evangelical and spiritual Sacrifices. For, besides that every good work, and holy action, done for the honour of God, is a Christian Sacrifice; *Feci Deo*, as *David* speaks, makes it a Sacrifice. As *S. Augustine* speaks, *Opus bonum, quod fit ut sancta societate inbareamus Deo*; Any good work that may joyn us to God, and commend us to his acceptation, that's a Sacrifice.

Besides that, a Christian offers up to God a fourfold Sacrifice:

1. *Sacrificium cordis contriti*; The Sacrifice of a Contrite heart, in the practise of Repentance. Thus *S. Paul* calls the Repentance and Conversion of the Gentiles, *The Offering up of the Gentiles*, or the sacrificing of them. And *David* acknowledgeth, *The Sacrifice of God, is a broken and contrite heart*, *Psal. 51.* The killing of our Lusts, the mortifying of our Sins, 'tis an holy, and acceptable Sacrifice and Service unto God. A Christian hath,

2. *Sacrificium cordis devoti*; the Sacrifice of a devout heart; that's the Sacrifice of Prayer; and our great Christian Sacrifice, when the Soul, by Prayer, ascends up to Heaven, as upon the Altar of Incense. Thus *David* acknowledgeth, *Let my Prayer be as Incense, and the lifting up my hands, as the Evening Sacrifice*, *Psal. 141. 2.* *Theodoret* observes, when *Christ* cast out the Sheep, and the Doves out of the Temple, and said, *My house shal be called an house of Prayer*, he abolish'd all other Sacrifices, and appointed Prayer to be the solemn Sacrifice, and Service of the Church.

3. A Christian hath another Sacrifice, that's *Sacrificium cordis grati*, the Sacrifice of a thankful heart, the Sacrifice of praise, and thanksgiving unto God. Thus we see, *Psal. 50.* God rejects their bloody Sacrifices; instead of them, he tells them, *Whosoever offers praise and thanks to him, he honours him. Will I eat the flesh of Bulls, or drink the blood of Goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving.* He takes away the first, that he may establish the second. And, *Heb. 13. 15.* *Let us offer the Sacrifice of praise to God continually, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.* And in this kind, the great Sacrifice of the Christian Church is the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; the great communication of the great benefit of our Redemption. The most religious and mysterious benediction and praising of God, 'tis the Cup of blessing, and calling upon the name of the Lord.

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4. A Christian hath yet another Sacrifice ; that's *Sacrificium cordis benefict*, the Sacrifice of Alms-deeds, and charitable communication, the distributing to the necessities of our poor Brethren ; that's accounted by God a Christian Sacrifice. The relief which the *Philippians* sent to St. Paul, 'tis called, *An Odour of a sweet smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, and well pleasing to God, Chap. 4. 18.* So the Apostle ; *To do good, and to distribute, forget not ; for with such Sacrifices God is well-pleased, Heb. 13. 16.*

These four,

1. The Sacrifice of a Contrite heart ;
2. The Sacrifice of a Devout heart ;
3. The Sacrifice of a Thankful heart ;
4. Sacrifices of a Charitable and Compassionate heart ; these are the Sacrifices of a Christian, which God accepts of him.

We have seen the Performance of this Service : Now follows,

Secondly, the Success and Acceptance of it. *Abel* and his Service is respected ; but *Cain* and his Offering is rejected. We have seen them go hand in hand in this outward Performance, nothing almost discernable that can make the difference : And herein we have three things observable :

1. The Author of this different Acceptance, that's God.
2. The ground of this different Acceptance.
3. The Nature of it ; that's Respecting, and Not-respecting.

First, The Author of this different Acceptance, is God. See here the Inversion that God makes. In their approach, *vers. 3.* there *Cain* hath the Precedency : first comes *Cain*, then afterwards *Abel* is named in the second place. Ey, there is the order of nature, and carnal precedency ; but see, how God returns them in His estimate : He gives *Abel* the precedency, names *Cain* in the second place ; *The Lord had respect unto Abel, but unto Cain he had not respect.* Ey, here is the order of Gods free Grace. He crosses his hand, as *Jacob* did with *Manasses* and *Ephraim*, he lays his hand of Acceptance on *Abels* head, his hand of Disallowance upon *Cain*. Carnal Prerogatives avail not in Gods favour, in matter of Grace. Nature hath no ground of Prerogatives ; there the New-birth carries it. *They were in Christ before me*, saith S. Paul, *Rom. 16.* That was a good ground of dignity. Paul was a *Post-natus*, Born out of due time : It was a matter of debasement to the Apostle.

Secondly, Let us consider the ground of this different Acceptation. Why did God regard the one, and reject the other ? We may conceive, there was a double ground of difference :

1. In respect of the Persons :
2. In respect of their Actions.

I. The first is taken from their Persons. 'Tis Gods method, he looks first to the Persons, then after to their Offerings. Men observe another order. With men, the Gift commends the Person to favour : As *Solomon* tells us, *A gift out of the bosom, makes way for a man*, it prospers where-ever it goes, it makes room for him, and brings him before Great men, *Prov. 18. 16.* 'Tis not so with God ; with him, the Person must commend the Gift, not the the Gift Person. First, God respects *Abel*, and then his Offering ; dislikes *Cain*, and then rejects his Service.

And in their Persons there was a double difference :

1. God puts a difference betwixt them.
 2. He finds a difference.
1. God puts a difference betwixt them ; that's the main original difference, his free choice and favour ; Here is the highest cause. Why did God respect *Abel* ? It was because he had a favour unto him. Why passed he by *Cain* ? He left him where he found him, in his corrupt original, and so turn'd away from him. It must answer the Apostles question, *John 14. 27.* *How is it, that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not unto the World ?* Here's the supream cause that must answer and satisfy all such enquiries, *I will have mercy on whom I will*

will have mercy ; Even so, Father, for it was thy good pleasure.

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2. God sees, and finds a difference in their Persons. *Abel* was a just, and an holy man ; God gave a testimony of him, that he was righteous. *Heb. 11. Cain*, a meer counterfeit in Religion. *He was of that wicked one*, saith *S. John*, 1 *John* 3. Here then is the second ground of difference ; 'tis the piety and holiness of the Person, that commends the work and service unto Gods Acceptation. This *Solomon* teaches us ; *A good man obtains favour of the Lord*, *Prov. 12. 2.* And on the contrary, saith *David*, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me*, *Psal. 66.* And so again, *Prov. 15. 8. The Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the Prayer of the upright, is his delight.* See, the wicked, they have their Sacrifices, they can offer the outward Carcasses of Religion ; but 'tis the Prayer of the upright, that is accepted, their spiritual devotion : And then, the Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord ; it is not only vain, or offensive, or odious, but 'tis abominable unto God ; he loaths and abhors it : but the Prayer of the upright is his delight ; not only accepts it, but takes delight and pleasure in it. But then, there is,

II. A second ground of difference, and that is in their Actions, and performance of their Sacrifice.

1. Some conceive, there was a difference in the Matter of their Sacrifice. *Abel*, he made choyce of the best, the Firstlings of the Flock, and the fat thereof ; *Cain* makes no such choyce, but takes any thing that comes next to hand, thinks any thing good enough to offer to God. O ! it is matter of just provocation ; God takes it in high displeasure, to have the meanest, and vilest things tendered to him ; He expects a fat Sacrifice at our hands, *Numb. 18. 12. The best of the Oyl, and the best of the Wine, and of the Wheat, shalt thou offer unto the Lord.* God complains of this base usage of him, *Malach. 1. 13. Ye have said, It is a weariness, and ye have snuffed at it, and ye have brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick ; Should I accept this at your hand ? Cursed be the deceiver*, saith God ; He accounts it fraud, and couzenage. The coarsest Grain, the least heap, the lightest Sheaff must be Gods portion. The Jews say, *Cain* was a covetous man, and his Sacrifice smelt of it : They say, he was the first that used false measures, and false weights, and he served his God with them. Nay, sure, *Religio de optimis* ; Religion calls for the choicest ; and, *Gratitudo de optimis*, Thankfulness will be no niggard, but open-handed to God. Can any cost or pains be too good for him ?

2. Besides this difference in the Matter, others conceive it in the Manner of their Service and Worship. *Abel*, he sacrificed to God, Religiously, Reverently, Devoutly ; *Cain* in meer Formality, without Reverence and Devotion. *Placebat in munere, qui placuit in corde*, saith *Cyprian*. *Abels* heart was devoutly affected ; that sets the price upon his Oblation. A devout heart, makes a Fat Sacrifice. Oh ! God abhors our loose, negligent, careless addresses to him. *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the Saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.* *Psal. 89. 7. Let us have Grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with Reverence, and Godly fear ; for even our God is a consuming fire.*

3. But the main ground of the difference *St. Paul* gives, *Heb. 11. 4. By Faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain.* That one Ingredient seasons all our Sacrifices. If that be wanting, God never regards them. Indeed, Faith is all in all in this work.

1. Faith is the Priest that only Sacrifices ; *Nos orat nisi fides.* *Aug.*

2. Faith, that's the Altar on which we must offer. *Unusquisque Sanctus, Altare Domini in se habet, quod est Fides*, saith *St. Hierom.* A believing heart, 'tis the Christians Altar that sanctifies the Offering. And,

3. Faith, it is the Offering too. *Primogenita cordis, fides*, saith *Aug.* Faith is the first-born Grace in the Soul of a Christian ; and the first-fruits, they must be offered, they dedicate, and consecrate the whole Lump to God. By this Faith, *Abel* excelled his Brother ; he Sacrificed,

1. In

Serm 1.

1. *In fide mandati*, in Conscience of Gods Commandment ; *Cain* for custom, and fashion-sake only. Worship upon Conscience is one thing, Worship upon custom only, is another. *Abel* offered,

2. *Ex fide promissi* ; *Abels* Faith look'd up to the *Messias*, saw him by Faith, that was the life of his Sacrifice ; *Cain* rested in the outward Ceremony. Without this Faith, *Impossibile est placere Deo* ; nay, *Neceffe est displicere*, said *Bernard*. By Faith, *Abel* pleased God ; for want of Faith, *Cain* displeased him.

Thirdly, Let us consider the nature of this acceptance ; that is said here, to be Respect, and Disrespect ; He respected *Abel*, and his offering, but to *Cain* and his offering, he had no respect.

1. He respected *Abels* Offering. Wherein consisted this respect ?

1. He respected it, that is, he allowed it, it stood with his acceptation. A great mercy, no doubt, for God to take our poor imperfect services in good part, to give approbation of them, to say to us, *Euge*, Well done good servant, thy prayers and thy sacrifices are come up for a memorial before God ; a great favour, for God to own our devotion ; Thy prayers shall come up with acceptance upon mine Altar, *Isai* 60. 7.

2. He respected it, that is, he took a delight in it, it was exceeding pleasing to him. The devout prayers of his servants, are matter of delight unto him, he takes pleasure in them. As, on the contrary, when we are weary of serving him, he is weary of our service. When we come to say with them in *Malachi*, O, what a weariness is it ; God will answer us, as he did those in *Isaiah*, Your services are abominable unto me, I am weary to bear them. But the prayers of Gods people arising from faith and devotion, they are like *Noah's* Sacrifice, God smelt a favour of rest in it, 'tis an offering of a sweet smell unto God. Their prayers are in Gods nostrils as sweet odours, holy Incense, heavenly perfumes. Who is this that comes like pillars of smoak, perfumed with Myrrhe, and Frankincense, with all powders of the Merchant ? *Cant.* 3. 6.

3. He respected it, that is, he honoured it with a publick testimony of his favour ; he gave witness, and attestation to it, by a visible sign from Heaven, consuming the Sacrifice by Heavenly Fire. So some translate it, *inflammavit Deus sacrificium Abel*. Thus God honour'd *Aarons* first Sacrifice, *Lev.* 9. A fire came from before the Lord, and consumed it. Thus he did testify his acceptance of *Dauids* Sacrifice at *Arauna's* threshing-floor ; and *Solomons* Sacrifice in the Temple, and *Elias* his on *Carmel*. 'Tis that which *David* prays for, Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt-sacrifices, *Psal.* 20. 3. turn them into ashes, and consume them.

4. He respected it, that is, he graciously rewarded it, granting his request, pouring out a blessing upon him. He shewed some good token of favour of him. First, he delighted in him, and then in his Sacrifice, and then in the prosperity of his servant. *Manoah's* wife, argues well, If the Lord would destroy us, he would not have accepted a burnt-offering at our hands, *Judg.* 13.

But then, with *Cain*, all goes contrary ; no respect had to him, his Sacrifice is rejected. And 'tis a requital in kind. He heeded not God, when he sacrificed to him, and God heeds him not. Meer fashion, and formality in Gods Service, makes God to be respectless of our prayers. Why should God hear him pray, who hears not himself ? *Excors sacrificium*, among the Heathens, the Sacrifice which wanted a heart, was counted prodigious, and of ill abode.

And as it is a just requital, so it is an heavy one ; The loss of his favour, the turning away of his countenance, the stopping of his ears against our prayers, 'tis the greatest Judgment ; when he shuts out our prayers, that they cannot enter, *Lam.* 3. 8. When he is angry with the prayers of his people, *Psal.* 80. 4. Oh ! it was death to *David*, O Lord, make not as though thou hearest not, lest I become like them that go down into the pit, *Psal.* 28. 1. It is an heavy doom, that God passes upon sinners, Though you make many prayers, I will not hear you, *Isai.* 1.

For Use of all. Is this the great success of our prayers, that God should respect them ? It must put us into a three-fold disposition in our addresses to him.

1. We

1. We must be *Cauti*, exceeding careful, and circumspect. If there be such hazard in our service, it may be accepted as it may be performed, or it may be rejected; it concerns us to look to the manner of performance, so to tender up our selves unto him, that it may be accepted. Naturally, we are all Popish in this point; we think, that the *Opus operatum* is sufficient; we rest in the outward deed done, so we dispatch with God in a perfunctory way, we think all's well, and that our Sacrifice shall fall on fire on it self, though we put not one spark of devotion under it. How foolish a thing is Formality in Gods Service? to frequent his Worship, and to make many Prayers, and yet to have all spilt, and lost, for want of an holy manner in the performance. Serm. I.

2. Is there such hazard in our prayers to God? It must make us *Attentos*, diligent, and attentive to observe how our prayers speed with God, what acceptance they find, how God doth answer them. Most men perform their service to God at all adventures; hit or miss, speed, or speed not, they heed it not. Oh! a good Christian should see, and observe how God respects his prayers, waiting upon him, till he gives us an answer of Peace. Our eyes should wait upon the Lord, *till he have mercy upon us*, Psal. 123. VVell; how shall that be? how shall we discern that our prayers are accepted? Besides the real grant of what we pray for which is a sensible evidence of the speeding of our prayers; Observe,

1. VVhether, doth God *Inflammaré sacrificium*? doth he enkindle the devotion, enflame thine heart with a holy fervency in prayer? 'tis like fire from Heaven, upon *Able's Sacrifice*.

2. Doth God inspire comfort into thine heart, when thou hast prayed unto him? Feelest thou an inward cheerfulness in thy soul? Art thou able to say with *David*, *I am well pleased, my soul is filled, as with marrow and fatness*? Like *Hannah*, she was no more sorrowful after she had prayed, as *David*, who in the beginning of his prayer mourn'd, but then felt that comfort that made him shout for joy. *The Lord hath heard the voice of my weeping, he hath heard my supplication, the Lord will receive my prayer*, Psal. 6.

3. This gracious acceptance of our prayer, it should make us *alacres*, it should beget in us an alacrity, and holy delight in the duty of prayer. It was *David's* resolution, Psal. 116. *Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live*. So, Psal. 104. *I will sing praise to my God, while I have my being; my meditation of him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord*.

A S E R M O N O N

Pfal. 19. 12, 13.

Who can understand his errors ? &c.



His Psalm is a pious and devout Meditation of the Prophet David. Now Naturalists observe, that there be two acts of the soul of hardest performance ;

1. The act of Reflexion, to make the Soul look inwards, and to recoil upon it self. *Motus reflexus*, it is *duplex motus*, a double motion.

2. The act of Meditation, to make the Soul ascend, and look upwards, to keep it still upon the VVing. And therefore

the Psalmist to maintain and strengthen his Meditation, uses an inspection into a threefold Book.

1. Is *Inspectio libri Creaturæ*, into the Book of the Creatures, *Vers. 1. The Heavens declare the glory of God, &c.* He looks upon that great Volume of Heaven and Earth, and there reads in Capital Letters, the Prints, and Characters of Gods glory. *Aliter pictura, aliter scriptura placet* ; he gazes not as Children upon gauds in Books, but reads, and meditates, and deeply considers them,

2. His Meditation ascends higher by a second Inspection, and that is *Inspectio libri Scripturæ*, verse 7. *The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul, &c.* And this Book is more precious than the former. The other, the Book of the Creature, is but as the Inventory of the Goods ; this of the Scripture is the Evidence, and Conveyance. and Assurance of all to us. In it he sees the riches of Gods Wisdom, and his precious promises. As St. Ambrose observes of *Abraham's Journals*, he came out of the Land of *Chaldea*, into the Land of *Promise*. God bids him look up to the Stars ; (and the *Chaldeans* were great beholders of the Stars and Firmament) but yet *Abraham* asks, *In quo cognoscam ?* How shall I know that I shall inherit it ? He could not gather that, by beholding the Creatures ; the Word of Promise, and the Book of the Scripture, must give Assurance of that.

3. He proceeds further. and feeds his Meditation by a third Inspection, and that is, *Inspectio in librum Conscientiæ* ; he unclaps that, which is the compendium, and sum, and transcript of the other Book, the Book of the Scripture, and there dwells upon a serious, and sad Meditation, *Who can understand his, errors ?*

1. He looks up to Heaven, and wonders at it, Who can comprehend the number of the Stars ? *Quis intelligit potentiam ?* Who can understand his power ?

2. He looks into the Scriptures, and finds this a more large Book. The former is but a shrivelled Scrole to this sacred Volume, as *Christ* compares it : Who can understand those sacred Truths, and profound Mysteries ? Who can conceive the Perfection of the Law ?

3. He looks into his own heart, makes a search into his Conscience, brings that Book out of the Rubbish, as they did the Book of the Law in *Josiah's* time ; who can count, and number up the blemishes of his Soul ? who can understand the errors of his life ?

1. The first Book, *Convincit*, it hath a power of Conviction ; Meditate on it, and observe Gods Power, or thou art an Atheist.

2. The

2. The second Book *Convertit*, it hath a power of Conversion ; Meditate *Serm. I.*
upon it, and learn his will, and worship out of it, or thou art an Infidel.

3. The third Book, *Accusat*, it hath the power of Accusation ; Look, and
meditate upon it, and there discover, and bewail thy sins, or thou art an Hypocrite.

The Text then contains *David's* Meditation upon that third Inspection into
the Book of his Conscience. Wherein we may observe four Particulars:

1. An holy Perplexity in the Soul of *David*, which makes him cry out, *Who*
can understand his errors ?

2. An holy Redress he seeks in this perplexity, *O cleanse me from my secret*
faults.

3. An holy Prevention for the time to come, *Keep thy servant from presumptuous*
sins, let them not have dominion over me.

4. An holy, both Resolution, and Consolation ; *Then shall I be upright, and*
I shall be innocent from the great Transgression.

1. In the first Part, we see the nature of Sin ; it casts a man into Perplexity,
it breeds gripings, and anguishes in the Soul, and Conscience.

2. In the second, we see the nature of Mercy ; that pardons, and purges, and
pacifies the Conscience ; that rebukes the storms, and brings in a sudden calm into
our Souls again.

3. In the third, we see the nature of Grace ; that prevents, keeps us from
presumptuous relapses ; that preserves us so, that no wickedness shall have domi-
nion over us.

4. In the fourth Part, we see the nature of Integrity ; that gives comfort, and
consolation, that strengthens it self in all good purposes and resolutions.

And these Particulars represent unto us the whole life of a Christian ; they set
in order the motions of the Soul in the beginnings and progress of his conversion.

1. What is the first Motion, and quickning of life in a Christian ; *Examen Con-*
scientiae, a searching out of his sins ; not a confident stepping into Heaven, in a pre-
sent assurance, but a sorrowful penitential perplexity.

2. The second Motion in the heart of a Christian, is Supplication, and Suit for
Pardon and Peace, *Cleanse me, purge me.*

3. The third Motion is imploring of help, Prayer for grace and assistance a-
gainst Relapses, establish me with thy spirit, *Keep back thy servant from presumptu-*
ous sins.

4. The fourth motion is *Studium integritatis*, and *Gaudium in studio*, resolutions
and endeavours for integrity, and all possible innocency, and the keeping of a
good Conscience towards God and Man.

Now put these together, and then we may discover three Combinations ;

1. A Combination of two sorts of Sins, not all of the same size and mag-
nitude ; here are *Erroris* and *Contumaciae*, sins of Infirmary, and sins of Presumption ;
sins of a weaker tincture, and sins of a double die ; *Lapsus in via*, and *Excursiones*
extra viam ; Slips and lapses in the way, and voluntary departings, and forsakings
of the way.

2. A Combination of two sorts of Graces ; here is *Gratia purgans*, and
Gratia custodiens.

1. Pardoning and purging Grace.

2. Preserving, and protecting Grace. That, is the Grace of subvention,
when we have sinned ; this, the Grace of prevention, that we may
not sin.

3. A Combination of two states and conditions of a Christian.

1. *Purgandus à secretis* ; for sins of Infirmary, who can avoid them ?

2. *Custodiendus à contumaciis* ; for sins of Presumption, we must not come
near them. We cannot be free *A Culpa*, from sins of daily IncurSION ; but we may,
and must be free *A Crimine*, from sins that waste the Conscience, and havock Piety.

The first thing considerable is *David's* holy Perplexity ; *Who can understand his*
errors ? And of it, take a double Consideration:

I. *Quæ*

S^m. 1.

1. *Quæ occasio?* What's the occasion of this Perplexity?
2. *Quæ conditio?* What's the nature of it?

First, What's the occasion of this sudden Perplexity in the Spirit of *David*? He was taken up even now into an Heavenly contemplation of the works and word of God; and the consideration of both these was always delightful unto him.

1. For his works, *Psal. 92. 4. Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy works, and I will triumph in the works of thy hands.*

2. For his word; The meditation of it was delightful to him, sweeter than the Honey, and the Honey-Comb, more pleasant than his appointed food; it was his *Song in the House of his Pilgrimage*. How then comes all this over-casting in *David's* Soul, like a sudden thunder-clap from a clear Sky? I answer, The causes of many perplexities, and astonishments in the Soul of man, are not always discernable. The Spirit of fear, as *Christ* speaks, comes not with observation;

1. *Non cum observatione peccati.* Not only some great notorious sin, but even some smaller offence, that thou little thinkest of, may fret and rankle in thy Conscience, and breed perplexity. The pricking of a pin may rankle, and fester, and prove as dangerous, as the wound of a Weapon. Thus *David's* heart smote him, for an irreverent touch of *Saul*, as well as for the cruel Murder of *Uriah*. Slight not the Commission of smaller sins; thou mayst hear of them when thou little thinkest of them.

2. *Non cum observatione personæ.* Indeed for notorious debauch'd wretches, for them to be put upon the rack of a perplex'd Soul, 'tis no great marvel; but even moderate and restrained men, yea even mortified Saints are subject to these pangs; not only *Saul*, but *David*; not only *Judas*, but *Peter* have suffered, and felt the anguishes of a guilty Conscience.

3. *Non cum observatione temporis.* Indeed, a sin lately committed, while the memory is fresh, and the guilt of it haunts a man, and stares in his face, then 'tis no wonder if he be perplexed. Nay, not only so, but some sin past and forgot, that thou hast buried in oblivion, a sin of many years past, even that may turn in upon thee, and perplex and affright thee; *The Clouds may return after the rain*. Thus *Job* complains, *Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth, Job 13. 26.* Thus the Patriarchs, many years after the fact, were troubled and perplexed with the sin of selling *Joseph*; *Gen. 42. 21. We are guilty concerning our Brother*, say they: Thirteen years, at least, had gone over their heads, since that deed was done; they had skind up the sore, and yet, see, it breaks out in their Soul again, and it bleeds afresh. These troubles of Soul then come not always with observation.

But yet, what might be the occasion of this perplexity in the Prophet *David*? *David* was now looking into the Law of God, considering the great light and glory of it, and a beam of that light hath darted into his Conscience, a spark of that fire hath fallen into that fuel, and that sets all on fire; casts him into a sudden amazement, and makes him cry out, *Who can understand his errors?*

Observe from hence, that the word of God hath a secret, unavoidable power upon the Soul, to convince it of sin, and to cast it into horror. Good *Josiah*, at the first reading of this Word, had his heart melted with fear and astonishment. Thus *S. Paul, Rom. 3. 20. By the Law, is the knowledge of sin.* And, *Rom. 7. 11. The Commandment slew him, and was found to be death unto him, vers. 10.* And there be divers reasons of this Truth:

1. In the Scripture is presented a transcendent rule of holiness, the infinite purity and sanctity which is in God himself. He is holy in his Works, but most holy in his Word. *He hath magnified his Word above all his Name, Psal. 138. 2.* In it shines the purity of his Nature, not capable of blemish, or imperfection. Now then, the Soul seeing this transcendent holiness in God, is presently convinced of infinite impurity. *Mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes, saith Job, Chap. 42. 5, 6. Probavit aurum, & reprobavit, saith*

saith S. Bernard ; The Angels, though as fine as gold, are *impure in his sight*. *Qui Serm. I. discernit inter Stellas, quanto magis inter glebas ?* If the Stars are not pure in his sight, how much less (Job 25. 5.) man, who is but a Clod of Earth ? And this makes the holiest men to tremble at his presence. *Cujus participatione sumus justī, ejus comparatione sumus injustī*, saith St. Augustine : They, who by derivation from him are made holy ; in comparison of him, are most unholy. Nay, the holy Angels themselves, in their approaches to him, do hide their feet and their faces. If *Sancti Angeli in Propitiatorio, quanto magis peccatores præ Tribunali ?* If Angels on the Mercy-Seat tremble, what shall Sinners do, that stand at the Bar, before the seat of Justice ?

2. As in the Scripture there is a transcendent rule presented, so is there also an exact rule of holiness prescribed. The Law forbids all sin, enjoins all holiness. No passage in the life of man, but is ordered in it. As *Theodoret* observes in the Ceremonial Law, and in the furniture of the Tabernacle, that every particular was curiously prescribed : *Si tales imagines, quales veritates ?* saith he. If the Ceremonial Law was so accurate, and precise, how strict is the Law of moral holiness, of which that was but a type ? The Measures, and Weights of the Sanctuary, were double as much as the ordinary Measures. Thine actions may carry weight, and be allowable amongst men in common conversation, which yet will be found light in the Sanctuary of God. *Mensurant se in docta statera consuetudinis humane, non in statera Sanctuarii*, saith S. Augustine. Bring thine Actions to this standard, and thy defects will be discover'd ; and then that which seems warrantable, and commendable amongst men, will appear sinful, and abominable before God.

3. The Law of God, it is a spiritual rule, not resting only in an outward conformity, but requires the exactness of Soul and Spirit. It keeps secret thoughts under awe ; and judgeth of outward actions, according to the heart ; not of the heart according to outward actions. *I the Lord search the heart, even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings*, Jer. 17. 10. Thus S. Chrysostom, discoursing of the exactness of Gods Law in the true intent of it saith, The Pharisees forbade the outward commission of uncleanness ; the Law of God forbids the uncleanness of the thought. They make the Law like John Baptist, he had *Zonam pelliceam circa lumbos*, a Leathern Girdle about his Loins ; whereas Christ had *Zonam auream circa pectus*, Rev. 1. 13. a golden girdle about his breast ; repressing the first rise, and stirrings, and motions of sin. This makes the Saints mourn for the first conceptions of sin, though they prove abortive. *Libera me à cogitationibus meis*, saith the devout Father ; Free me, and purge me from my sinful cogitations.

4. The Law of God is operative, not a dead Letter, but hath an active power to work upon the heart. *Verbum Dei, non est opus, sed operans*, saith St. Ambrose. The Spirit of God goes along with it, and makes it quick, and powerful, and sharp, and mighty in operation, Heb. 3. As in the frame of a mans body, under every vein there runs an Artery full of spirits ; so, under every vein of Truth in the Scripture, there is an Artery of Spirit, quickning, searching, discovering, citing, condemning.

This discovers the ground of that averiness that is in most men from this blessed Word. Why can any other discourses find entertainment rather than this ? Why ? It breeds trouble and perplexity ; it discovers my sin ; It affrights my Conscience ; makes me out of love with my self, and appear ugly. These Spectacles are too true for my false eyes. *Ahab* cannot endure to talk with *Micaiah*, nor meet with *Elizah*, they never speak good unto him. The generalities of Scripture we can like well enough ; but when it comes near, and begins to close with us, we sling away from it. *Amant veritatem lucentem, orderunt redarguentem*, saith S. Ambrose. And that's the first Consideration, *Quæ occasio ?*

Secondly, A second Consideration of this perplexity in *David*, is *Quæ conditio ?* What is the nature, and purpose of it ? And we see it express'd in a vehement, and

Sermon. I. and passionate question; *Quis intelligit? Who understands his errors?* And it may be resolved into these three Expressions:

1. It is *Vox ignorantis*; It is the speech of a man, who confesses his ignorance: he knows not his errors.
2. It is *Vox admirantis*; It is the speech of him, who sees many errors in himself, and suspects more, and is astonished at the consideration of them.
3. It is *Vox gementis*; He utters his thoughts with a sighing Accent, and groans within himself at the sense of them.

First, It is *Vox ignorantis*; He knows not his errors; and then it implies this Observation; That the perfect discovery of the errors of our lives, is a thing most hard, and even impossible. The truth of this Observation will appear in these Particulars:

1. In the strength of *David's* Affection:
2. In the Matter of it.
3. In the Grounds.
4. In the Consequences.
5. In the Uses to be made of it.

I. The Strength of it. *David* propounds it not only by way of bare assertion only, *No man can know them*; but by way of question, and that is a form of greater Emphasis, and Impression: And then, he propounds this question, not only to himself, or in his own name, but puts the question to any, let him be what he will, yet he must fall short, he cannot know them; *Who can?*

1. *Quis in lege intelligentissimus?* Let him be never so cunning, and skilful in the Law of God, the greatest Rabbi that ever was, a second *Ezra*, an exact Scribe in the Law of his God; though, with *Ezekiel*, and *S. John*, he hath swallowed the Book, yet he may run into the commission of some errors, that he is not aware of. Even the High-Priest himself was to offer for his own ignorances, and infirmities, *Heb. 5. Ita nihil est in hominibus tutum, ne Pontifex quidem*, saith *Origen*.

2. *Quis in conversatione cautissimus?* Who, though never so accurate, and watchful in his conversation, can know all his errors? Let him keep never so strict a watch over his own heart, yet some sin will escape him. *In many things we offend all*, saith *S. James*, Chap. 3. 2. He saith not *In many things some of us offend*, or in a few things all of us offend, but in many things we offend all. They who are all clean, had need wash their Feet, saith our Saviour. To which *S. Bernard* alluding, gives this warning; that though we choose our way, and pick our path, and so avoid mire and dirt, yet, *In bono itinere, pulverem colliges*; in the fairest, and cleanest way, our feet will gather soil, some errors will be committed.

3. *Quis in examine conscientiae diligentissimus?* Who though never so frequent and diligent in examining and revising his conscience; who ever so communed with his heart, and so search'd out his spirit. that no sin lay undiscovered? They who have daily practised this work of Repentance, and have kept a privie watch, and search in their hearts, are yet fain to return an *Ignoramus*; and though not conscious to themselves of any sin unrepented of, yet, to make all sure, will beg pardon of God for unknown transgressions. As men, not guilty of any breach of Law, to their own knowledge, will obtain a general pardon of the King, to prevent the worst. That's the first, the strength of this Assertion; Who doth understand? &c.

II. The matter of this Question; *Who understands his errors?* Take it in three Particulars;

1. *Quis intelligit naturam errorum?* Who understands the nature of all his actions, whether they be erroneous, yea, or no? whether that which he doth, be warrantable and good, or otherwise? Indeed, for the main Capital duties, those *Principia practica*, and heads of morality, and those likewise that are of the nearest, and most evident proximity unto them, he is hardly a Christian who know

knows not them ; but for many particular Cafes, and Questions of confcience incident to the life of man, who can refolve them? Some actions, indeed, are notoriously evil, fins of the firft magnitude, the light of nature reproves them ; Some of weaker evidence, fins of infirmity ; fome not difcerned, nor known, fins of ignorance and incogitancie ; See them represented in three Parables, *Luke 15. The loft Son, The loft Sheep. The loft Groat.* Art thou not as the loft Son ? Dost thou not break away from God by wilful rebellion ? Yet thou mayeft be as the loft Sheep, and stray away from thy God by a fin of infirmity. If not fo, yet Who hath not been as the loft Groat, and his action hath flipt away out of his hand, betwixt his fingers, as it were, by ignorance, and incogitancie ?

2. *Quis intelligit numerum errorum ?* Who ever yet kept fuch a careful account in his confcience, as to Register, and Book down the juft number of his fins ? *David*, who had not fin'd fo frequently as we have done ; yet, when he furveys the number of his Sins, he gives up this account ; *They are more in number than the hairs of my head ; mine heart hath failed me, to fee the fwarms and numbers of them.* Upon which place, Saint *Auguftine* devoutly meditates ; *Capilli minuti funt, fed multi*, faith he, *David* had little fins, like as Hairs ; but yet multiplying, and increafing as the hairs of his head. Thus S. *Bernard* counfels us, In our addreffes to God, to confider, whether we can meet with him, with ten thoufand fins repented of, who comes againft us with twenty thoufand fins that we never thought of.

3. *Quis intelligit aggravationes errorum ?* Who understands the many aggravations that may make a feemingly-fmall fin out of meafure finful ? Nay, an action good of it felf, yet may have fome malignant circumftances, that may blemish, and corrupt it. Thus *Job* refpecting the fubftance of his actions, and his good intentions, confidently faith, *O that I were weighed in a ballance* ; but if he takes in the many mif-carrying circumftances, then, if he will be weighed, he muft follow S. *Bernard's* counfel, *Statera fit crux Chrifti*, the Beam and Standard muft be *Chrift's* Crofs, and the worth of his merits muft help down the weight, or it will be too light.

As in the miracle of the Loaves, *Matth. 14.* the Loaves were but five in bulk ; Ey, but what faith our Saviour ; *Colligite fragmenta, Gather up the fragments* ; and then there were twelve baskets full. So, though thy fins at firft appear but few, and fmall, yet gather up the Fragments, the many circumftances, and aggravations of them ; Thou didft fuch a fin in fuch a place, at fuch a time, being of fuch a calling, after, former Pardon obtained, and Vows made, and Grace received ; thefe aggravations will make a fmall fin, exceeding finful. That's the fecond Branch, the Matter.

III. *Quod fundamentum ?* What is the ground ? Whence arifes this difficulty of difcerning errors ? We fhall find it chiefly from thefe three.

1. *Sublimitas Legis* ; the divine excellency of the Law of God ; a moft comprehensive Law, requiring exact holinefs, and forbidding the leaft fwarrings, and aberrations there-from. To which purpofe, befides the fubftance and body of an action which the Law requires, there are two dimensions in the Law of God, by which we may judge, and take the eftimate of our actions.

1. The firft is the *Maximum quod fe* ; and that fcantling is fet down in the firft Commandment ; *With all thy mind, with all thy heart, with all thy ftrength.*

2. The fecond Dimension is, the *Minimum quod non* ; and that fcantling is fet down in the Commandment, *Non concupifces, Thou fhalt not luft.*

Now judge of thine actions by thefe two Dimensions ;

1. In thy good actions, haft thou kept the firft Proportion ? haft thou done the good that thou fhouldft do with all thy might ? Then,

2. In thy fins, haft thou obferved the fecond proportion ? haft thou not fo much as lusted after fome unlawful actions ? haft thou been free from all motions, and inclinations that way ?

Serm. I.

Ye see, betwixt these two dimensions of the Law of God, here is a large space for the intervening of many offences. This made *David* break out into admiration; *I see an end of all perfection, but thy Law is exceeding broad.*

2. The second ground of this difficulty in finding out our sins, is *Subtilitas cordis*, the marvellous subtilty, and closeness in every mans spirit. The heart of man is an unsearchable lurking place for sin; there are many windings and turnings, and corners in it. 'Tis full of excuses, and concealments, framed like a labyrinth, or maze, or like an harbour for Thieves, with many secret passages, and close conveyances in it. It will *excusare excusationes*, as *David* saith, weave cunning excuses. It will hide a sin like *Rachel*, when *Laban* searched for the Idols; bury it like *Achan*, in the midst of his Tent. *David* finds it so intricate a work to search his own heart, and to find out his sins, that he begs Gods help in it. *Psal.* 139, 23. *Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me.*

3. The third ground of this difficulty, is *Falsitas Satanae*, the fallhood of Satan, his depths of deceitfulness, by which he will perswade us, and bear us in hand, that it is otherwise with us than we conceive and fear; Either he tells us, it is no sin, as he did to *Eve*, ye are mistaken; or else he tells us, it is not so great a sin; or not so many sins, we may do well enough for all these. If we make him our Auditour, he will falsify our Accounts, like the unjust Steward in the Gospel; *How much owest thou my Master?* Our conscience tells us an hundred Measures, nay, ten thousand Talents; but he will falsify our account, and make us write wrongs, and set down fifty. That's the third Branch, *Quod Fundamentum?*

IV. *Quae consequentia?* What be the consequences of this truth?

1. Is this true, that none *can understand his errors?* nor know what sins he hath committed? Then sure it is much more true, *Quis intelligit quae non commisit?* Who understands what sins he might have committed, had not God restrained, and by his Grace prevented the commission of them? And so it is *Motivum gratitudinis*, a provocation to thankfulness. There is not the greatest wickedness, but thou mightest have acted it, had God taken his hand from off thee and left thee to thy self. As a man who is gone over a narrow Bridge safely, or escaped some great down-fall, where others have perished, and then looking back, how is he affected with fear, and thankfulness? *Tot sunt mihi remissa, quot non commissa*, saith *S. Augustine* piously.

2. Is this true, *Who can understand the errors he hath committed?* Then this is true also, *Quis intelligit quae commissurus est*, Who knows what sins he shall fall into, if God leave him to himself? And so it is *Motivum vigilantiae*, a provocation to watchfulness. Thou that standest now, little knowest thou how soon, and how foully thou mayst fall, if thou takest not heed. Consider thy self, saith *S. Paul*, *Gal.* 6.1. *lest thou also be tempted.* *Hazael* could not conceive, nor believe, that he ever should be so cruel, and bloody, as *Elisba* fore-told him, *What, am I a Dog, that I should do so?* It could not enter into the heart of *S. Peter*, that he should ever deny his Master, though *Christ* forewarned him of it. Rather let us imitate the Apostles; when they heard of a Traytour, they all cried out, *Master, Is it I?* Wherein they discover,

1. A confession of their ignorance, They knew not their own hearts; and,
2. A suspicion of the possibility of it, I may be found a Traytour, for ought I know.

3. Is it true, No man understands his sins he hath committed? Then *Quis intelligit semina peccatorum?* Who knows all the seeds of sin, and inclinations unto evil, that are in-bred, and lie lurking in his heart? And so it is *Motivum humilitatis*, a provocation to humility. The spawn of all sin is in-bred in us. Original sin is virtually, and seminally every sin. As all natural forms are produced, and drawn forth, *de potentia materiae*, from the first matter, so all actual sins spring and grow from that confused Chaos of original sin. In respect whereof see what an hideous description *S. Paul* makes of every man; *Their throat is an open Sepulchre.*

pulchre, with their tongues have they used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips, *Serm. I.*
 their feet are swift to shed blood, Rom. 3. 13. &c. Not that every man is guilty of
 these actual sins, but because the spawn and original of them is inbred in every
 one. That's the fourth thing, the Consequences.

V. *Qui usus?* What are the Uses to be made hereof? They are of three
 sorts.

1. Of Conviction.
2. Of Caution.
3. Of Consolation.

1. Of Conviction. Is *David* thus troubled, and perplexed upon examina-
 tion, and search into his heart?

1. In what case are they, *Qui nunquam inquirunt*, who never so much
 as call their hearts to examination? If *David*, who hath so often reckoned with
 God, and by frequent Repentance labour'd to make all even with him, yet finds
 so many back-reckonings; how fearful is their case, who multiply their arrears,
 and run use upon use, and never account with him?

2. And worse; In what case are they, *Qui peccata abscondunt*? If *David*
 searches, and sorrows for unknown sins, how desperate are they, who when Con-
 science accuses, and would ease it self by sorrow, and confession, do smother, and
 silence it? See the least grudgings of Conscience affect *David*; how forlorn are
 they then, who when their Sin, like the Pox, would break out, they drive it
 in again, as *Felix* did, and strike it back to the heart?

3. And worst of all are they, *Qui palam profitentur*, who are sinners, and
 know themselves so, and glory in it. *David* mourns for secret sins, and these
 boast themselves in manifest Impieties. They who are Saints, and Angels, and al-
 ready in Heaven, in compare with thee, mourn for suspicious sins, and thou shew-
 est thy sins like Sodom, and triumphest in thine abominations.

2. Of Caution, Is this true, no man understands his errors? Then.

1. *Non sufficit Judicium alienum*. What though no man can accuse thee
 of sin? That will not acquit thee. Many think to go to Heaven by the voice of
 the Country, if no man can blame them: No, we must distinguish betwixt a good
 name, and a good conscience. *Fama propter homines, Conscientia propter Deum*,
 saith *S. Augustine*: A good name will carry it amongst men; but it is a good
 conscience only that can acquit us before God. *Quid prodest tibi neminem habere
 conscium, habenti conscientiam?* saith *Lactantius*. What though thy Neighbours and
 Brethren absolve thee? yet God and thy conscience can condemn thee. The good
 Centurion, *Luke 7.* carried it clear by the voice of his Neighbours, *Dignus est*,
vers. 4. He is worthy that thou shouldst come to him; Ey, but his own conscience
 reproves him, *vers. 7.* *Domine, non sum dignus*, Lord I am not worthy to come un-
 to thee.

2. Is this true, none can understand his errors? Then *non sufficit Judi-
 cium proprium*; the absolutions of thine own conscience cannot fully discharge
 thee. *I know nothing by my self*, saith *S. Paul*, *1 Cor. 4. 4.* Yet am I not hereby justified;
 but he that judgeth me is the Lord; who can find fault with those actions which we
 account unblamable, and very commendable. *Aliter judicat peritus artifex, aliter
 imperitus inspector*, saith *S. Aug.* A skillful workman, will find great fault there,
 where an unskillful snatrerer can see no failing.

3. *Non sufficit Judicium Satanae*. It is possible Satan may not be able
 to accuse us, and yet notwithstanding, his silence cannot acquit us. As in his sift-
 ings of *Job*, he could find no matter of any just accusation. In that Plea against
Job, the Devil non-suited himself, he had nothing to object against him. As *S.*
Chrysostom observes, when God asked Satan the second time, *Whence comest thou
 Satan?* The Devil answered, *From compassing the earth*: he doth not say from
 tempting of *Job*; he had no complaint against him. But though Satan could not,
 yet God could, and did lay many things against him; *Thou writest bitter things a-
 gainst me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth*. That's the second sort.

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3. Of Consolation. Art thou cast into this perplexity with *David*? Cry-
est thou out with him, *Who can understand his errors*? Then ease and comfort
thy self, with these three relieving Considerations.

1. *Quis intelligit multitudinem misericordiarum*? Who can understand
the multitude of Gods mercies and compassions? They are not only over all his
good works, but they are far beyond, and above, and over all our evil works,
Thus *S. Chrysostom*, discoursing upon that passage, *Psal.* 3. 5, 6. *Thy mercy, O Lord,*
is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds; Thy righteousness is
like the great mountains, thy judgments are a great deep. See, saith he, the dimensions
of his mercy, are far beyond the bounds of all his other Attributes: The height
of the Clouds, the bigness of the Mountains, the depth of the Sea, they may be
fathom'd, but who knows the largeness of the Heavens, or who can comprehend
the multitudes of his mercies?

2. *Quis intelligit vim, & virtutem meriti Christi*? Doth thy heart cry out,
Who can understand his errors? Quiet and comfort it with this Meditation; Who
can understand the virtue of *Christ's* blood, the price of his merits, the plenty of
his redemption? He is able to abolish all kinds of sin. His blood is compared to
the depth of the Sea; *I will cast all their sins into the depth of the Sea,* *Micah* 7. 19.
and that can drown Mountains as well as Mole-hills. The strength of his mer-
cies is like the strength of the Sun, and that can dispel the thickest Clouds, as
well as the thinnest vapours, *Isai.* 44. 22. *He will blot out as a thick cloud thy trans-*
gressions, and as a cloud thy sins.

3. *Quis intelligit vim pœnitentiae*? Answer these doubtings of thine own
heart, with this Meditation; Who understands the virtue of Repentance?

1. Of general Repentance, for sins known, and unknown. In this case if
upon search thou canst not discover all thy sins, deal as the *Israelites* were to do,
in finding out of a Murther. *Dent.* 21. 1. They were to search into all their
Cities, and to measure round about them, and if they could not find it out, they
were to pray, *Lord be merciful to thy people.* So, measure thou, and search thou in-
to every corner of thine heart, and say unto the Lord, Forgive me mine unknown
sins. Look upon the whole Law of God, and acknowledge the whole Indictment,
plead guilty to all. With the Publican confess thy self a sinner; with *David* con-
fess thy self a great sinner, *Psal.* 25. with *S. Paul*, confess thy self the greatest of
sinners. This very general Repentance, will much ease and comfort thee.

2. Who understands the virtue of daily Repentance? There is great use
of that to ease thee of these anxieties. For,

1. It hath a virtue of Prevention of greater sins. The daily pumping
of a leaking Ship, will keep it from sinking. As they do, who would
prevent the Stone, they will dayly use helps to carry away the smal-
ler Gravel; so labour thou by daily Repentance to purge away thy
smaller sins, and thou shalt never be troubled with the Stone in the
Heart. And,

2. Daily Repentance will facilitate the harsh and bitter work of Re-
pentance, which is exceeding unwelcome to flesh and blood. Use
thy self to it daily, and it will free thee from those fearful pangs of
late Repentance. A green wound is easily cured; but suffer it to
rankle and fester, then lancing and searing, will be all little enough.
'Tis good for a man to bear the yoke of Repentance. As
S. Ambrose even from his youth; it will make it more easie.
speaks, if it be *diurna*, it will not be *diuturna*. Those quotidian fits
will be both shorter and easier. Every day reckon with thy God,
and thy Conscience, put not all off to the last extremity. What
Christ saith of *Cares*, is most true of Sins and Repentance for them,
Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof.

Felix qui potuit.

A S E R M O N O N

St. James 1. 22:

But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.



His passage of Scripture is S. James his Exhortation for an holy, and religious receiving and entertaining the word of God. A duty in it self exceeding useful and beneficial; *It is able to save our souls*; no less good comes by it, as the Apostle tells in the foregoing *verse*. Now miscarriages in such weighty performances, are very dangerous and prejudicial. The best things, when they are abused, prove most mischievous. And therefore the Apostle contents not himself to commend this duty to us at large, and in general

terms, so it be done any way, it is enough, all is well; but prescribes an holy manner, sets down a strict caveat and proviso, how we should receive the word of God, so that we may reap profit by it, and be blessed in the deed.

So then, the Text, it is a strict severe Caveat for the due receiving the word of God. And it is framed in that manner, as is like to be most prevailing, and effectual; and that is, by forewarning us of a great inconvenience and mischief that will befall us, if we fail in the duty. And so in the words we may observe two Particulars:

1. *Officium*, the Duty prescribed, and enjoined us: .
2. *Periculum*, the great Danger we run into, if we fail in the Duty, and miscarry in the performance of it.

First, The Duty prescribed; and in it observe three things:

1. Here is *Suppositio officii prævi*; A previous preparative Duty presupposed; that is, Hearing of the Word; we must become Hearers, set our selves to attend, and listen to what God speaks to us. That's the Duty necessarily implied, and supposed.
2. Here is *Prohibitio officii erronei*; A Prohibition of a gross mistake in performance of this Duty; Beware you err not in this duty of Hearing, and place all your Religion in bare Hearing, as if that were all which God requires of us, to give him the Hearing; That's expressed in this word, *Only; Be not Hearers only*.
3. Here is *Injunctio officii debiti*; The main, full, compleat Duty we owe, and must perform, to the word of God, if we look for any good by it. What's that? We must be *Doers of the Word*; Practise what we Hear, and yield our Obedience to it. That's the first Particular, The Duty prescribed.

Secondly, Follows the other Particular of the Text, to enforce this Duty; that's the danger and mischief we shall fall into, if we fail in this Duty, and that will prove to be an heavy miscarriage, *We shall deceive our own selves*.

First, Come we to the Duty prescribed; and in it, to the

I. First Particular, that's *Suppositio officii*; The Duty presupposed. The Text premises, and supposes this, That we must be Hearers. And because there are many things that will crave our Audience, and the Ear lies open to every voice, *The Ear is not satisfied with Hearing*, saith Solomon, *Eccles. 1. 8.* therefore in point of

Faith

Serm. I. Faith and Religion, the Apostle limits our Hearing to the only, and peculiar, and proper Object, and that is, *The word of God.*

So that here are two things considerable;

1. The limitation of the matter, that must take up our Hearing, and that is the word of God: And then here is,
2. The prescription of the Duty, this word of God must be Heard, and attended to.

1. Then for the Object. All our religious Hearing must be conversant about this one thing, the word of God. The Text places us, like *Mary*, at *Christ's* feet, commends unto us that *Unum necessarium*, that one thing necessary. *I will hear what God the Lord will say*, saith *David*, *Psal.* 85. 8. Thus when God brings his Son into the Church, he confines our Hearing unto *Christ's* Voice, *This is my Well-beloved Son, Hear him*, *Matth.* 17. 5. Faith hath an Ear for no other Voice, but only to *Christ's* Voice, speaking in the Scripture. *Rom.* 10. 17. *Faith comes by Hearing, and Hearing by the word of God.* 'Tis the *Indoles*, and natural disposition of Faith, to listen to *Christ's* Voice, and to none but his. *My Sheep Hear my Voice, but the voice of strangers they will not Hear*, *John* 10. Thus *Origen* expresseth it, *Ut naturalis quidam attractus quibusdam inest, ut magneti ad ferrum bitumini ad ignem; sic Fidei ad Divinum Verbum.* As only the Loadstone draws the Iron to it, nothing else; so the word of God only can draw our Faith unto it, and make us fasten upon it.

There are three things we should aim at in our religious Hearings; and all three are the peculiar effects of the word of God:

1. To Enlighten us.
2. To Regenerate, and Reform us.
3. To save us.

1. It is proper to the blessed Word, to Enlighten us, and to acquaint us with the mind of God. *He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scripture*, *Luke* 24. 45. The holy Scripture, that is able to make us wise to Salvation, *2 Tim.* 3. 15. And when all comes to all, Saving Wisdom, it is the only Wisdom. *By thy Precepts I get understanding*, saith *David*, *Psal.* 119. 104. Ignorance of this World, 'tis the Mother and breeder of all errour. *Ye err, not knowing the Scripture*, saith *Christ* to the *Sadducees*, *Matth.* 22. 29. This Word made *David* wiser than his Elders, for all their age and experience; it made him wiser than his Teachers, for all their craft and policie, *Psal.* 119. 98, 99, 100.

2. It is proper to this good word of God, to Regenerate, to Sanctifie, and Reform us. *Of his own will hath he begot us with the word of Truth*, *Jame* 1. 18. The Word hath *Vim seminale, & plasticam*; 'tis the only proper seed of Regeneration. So saith our Saviour in that holy Prayer of his for his Disciples, *Sanctifie them through thy Truth, thy Word is Truth*, *John* 17. 17. And again, *Now are ye clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you*, *John* 15. 3. It, and it only, can quicken us, and cleanse us; can sanctifie, and reform us.

3. Salvation, it is proper to this word of God. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think to have eternal life*, *John* 5. 39. In other Truths there may be *Salubritas quædam, in hac salus ipsa querenda est.* Some sober Truths may be in other words; but saving Truth is only to be found in the Word of God. The Angel to *Cornelius*, gives this Testimony of it, *Acts* 11. 14. *Send for Peter, he shall tell thee Words, whereby thou, and all thine house shall be saved*; It is the main end of the Scriptures, *John* 20. 31. *These are written, that believing, ye might have life through his Name.* 'Tis called, *The Word of life*, *Phil.* 2. 16. S. Paul calls this Word of the Gospel, *The Power of God to Salvation*, *Rom.* 1. 16. 'Tis called *The Gospel of the Grace of God*, *Acts* 20. 'Tis the *Gospel of the Kingdom*, *Matth.* 4. The *Gospel of Salvation*, *Ephes.* 1. and so the only Object of the hearing of Faith.

2. Here is *Præscriptio actus*. Our Attention and Hearing of this blessed Word, 'tis enjoind us, 'Tis no indifferent, arbitrary thing left to our own choice and liking; come to it at your leisure, or stay at home at your pleasure: but imposed upon us by a strong Obligation.

1. It is enjoy'd us as a Duty. 'Tis the Preface which God premises *Serm. I.* to his Law, *Hear O Israel.* Necessity is laid upon us, and wo be to us, if we do not. So S. James, Chap. 1. 19. *Let every man be swift to Hear:* Swift, ready, quick diligent, suffer not a word to fall to the ground. *He that planted the ear, shall not be Hear,* saith David, *Psal. 94. 9.* It follows as strongly, *He that planted the ear, shall not be be Heard?* Shall we turn the deaf ear to him, who hath given us our Hearing? This Law, 'tis strengthened with a Curse. *He that turns away his Ear from Hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abominable,* saith Solomon, *Prov. 28.* As if he should say, He who abhors to hear God, God will abhor to hear him. That's no great matter, saith the profane man; let not him trouble us with Preaching, and we will not trouble him with Praying. Oh, say not so, there will come a time when we would be glad God would hear us, as David speaks, *Psal. 28. Lest if thou be silent to me, makest as if thou wouldst not hear, I become like them that go down into the Pit.* What said Jotham? *Hearken unto me, that God may hearken unto you,* Judg. 9. 7. As it is a Duty, so

2. It is a weighty duty, not slightly to be esteemed. 'Tis a great part of our Religion. In it we make a real protestation of our allegiance and humble subjection, which we owe to our God. By it we acknowledge him to be the Supreme Lawgiver in his Church. *Hear him,* was the word by which Christ was declared the great Prophet, and Doctor of his Church.

3. It is a fundamental duty; the prime original duty of our Religion; the Breeder, and Mother, and Nurse of all other duties which we owe to God. Hearing, and receiving the Word, it is the inlet and entrance of all Piety. As the first Insinuations of sin were conveyed by the Ear into our first Parents, so the first inspirations of Grace have the same entrance. S. Paul makes it the first beginning of Religion. *Rom. 10. 14. How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? How shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? Auris,* 'tis *Os anima,* saith S. Augustine. The soul is nourished by the ear, as the body receives nourishment by the mouth.

4. It is a duty exceeding profitable, and beneficial to us. Many rich and precious Promises are made to the due receiving and entertaining of the word of God. See two main ones in the Context.

1. It is *ἐμπεριστατός λόγος*, *An engrafted Word*: able to alter and change our nature; of a wild Crab-stock, it will make it a kindly Plant. *Invenit labruscam,* saith Chrysostom, *facit Olivam.* It sanctifies our nature, and makes it fruitful.

2. It is able to save our souls: *Isai. 55. Hear, and your soul shall live.* There is in it a Divine Power to free us from perdition, to give us entrance and admission into Heaven. *They have Moses and the Prophets,* saith Abraham to Dives; if they listen to them, they may escape this place of torment, *Luke 16.*

5. It is *Perpetuum officium*, not only a duty and mean to beget Grace at first, but of perpetual use to encrease and continue it. It is not only *Semen*, but *Lac*; not only *Lac*, but *Cibus*. It is not only incorruptible Seed to beget us, *1 Pet. 1. 23.* but Milk to nourish us, *1 Pet. 2. 2.* not only Milk, but Strong-meat to strengthen us, *Heb. 5.* You shall see the date of this duty of Hearing *Psal. 95. Domine cognominatur hodie, While it is called to day, hear his voice;* The day of Grace, the day of Life; This *hodie* must be *quotidie*; This day must be every day. Consider the multiplicity of duties required of us, the imperfections of knowledge in the best of us, the weakness of Grace, that still hangs about us; those same *ὀρεθήματα*, as S. Paul calls them, the Wantings of our Faith, still to be made up; and it will appear, this Hearing of the Word to be a perpetual duty.

We have done with the first Particular, the Duty supposed; Now follows;

II. The second, that is *Prohibitio officii erronei*, the Mistake we must beware of, in performing this Duty. *Hear* we must, but we must not only *Hear*: As if he should say, All Religion is not in Hearing, mistake not your selves, more goes to make

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make a good Christian than bare Hearing. There are more duties than only Hearing, which we owe to this word of God. Take it in these Particulars.

1. *Hearing*, 'tis not *Totum officium* 'tis not the whole sum, and body of Christianity and Religion; it is but a part only: All our Religion, it is not in listening and attending to the word read, or preach'd to us. The body of Religion, 'tis like the natural body of a man, it consists of many members, and parts; many several joynts required to the making up of an entire body; heart and head, and hands and feet; so Religion consists of several Services; hearing, praying, practising, doing holily, suffering patiently; puts all graces to their due exercise. He cannot be accounted a man, who is destitute of any vital, or substantial part; nor can he go for a good Christian, who wilfully fails in any of those holy duties, that are required of him. *Pietas consistit ex integris causis*. He is no substantial Christian, who is good at some one duty of Religion, and fails in all others; can hear well, frequent the Church, listen to a Sermon, but there's all. We must not place all Piety in one part of it, shrink up all Religion into one Duty, though never so weighty. 'Twas the Pharisee's Religion he inquired after some one great Commandment. No, saith Christ, *The second is like unto it*. He who fails in one, is guilty of all. He who saith, Thou shalt not miss a Sermon; saith also, Thou shalt not neglect Prayers, and other Duties of Christianity. Now if thou fail'st in any of these, thou art a Transgressor. *These things ye ought to have done, and not to leave other things undone*, is Christ's rule for obedience. Add to your knowledge, other graces, saith S. Peter, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6. *Fear God, and keep (all) his commandments*; *Hoc est totum hominis*; that's the whole Duty of man.

2. *Hearing*, it is but *pars initialis*; as it is but one part of piety, so it is but the first part, and step of piety; It is *inter principia*. As, to life and growth, is required nourishment; to that, concoction; to that, feeding, and receiving Meat. Now as he, who only tastes Meat, and goes no further, is far off from nourishment, because he stays at the beginning, concocts nothing (hearing is but feeding, practising is concocting and nourishing,) or as he who travels, must not only set out, but hold on, or he will not finish his journey; so in piety, hearing is but the first step, a progress must be made in all other Duties.

3. *Hearing*, it is not *officium propter se*; It is a religious Duty, but not prescribed for it self, but in reference, and subordination to other Duties; 'tis *propter aliud*; like those Arts that are called, Instrumental Arts, and are only to enable and fit us for other and higher Performances; their use is only for Preparation; so it is in hearing and knowing Gods word; the knowledge of it is not only that we should know it, but to enable us for further Duties. As in Husbandry, ploughing and sowing is not for it self, but it aims at Fruit, and Reaping; 'tis so with Hearing, that is but receiving of Seed; Fructifying in good Works, that's the end and Harvest of Hearing.

4. *Hearing*, it is *levissimum officium*; In compare with the substantial parts of Piety, bare Hearing is but an easie Duty. Indeed to hear as we should do, Attentively, Reverently, Devoutly, is a Task of some Pains, but yet of a great deal easier Discharge, than other Duties are. Hypocrisy and Formality, will be very assiduous in listening and attending, *Swift to hear*; but slow and dull to more weighty Performances. Repentance and Mortification, and the Trade of Godliness in Holiness and Righteousness, Oh, that is an hard saying. How unworthy is it, to put off God with such slight Services, to mock him with such easie Performances; tithe the Mint, and Annise: but the great things of the Law are too heavy for us. Thus we see that only *hearing* of Gods word, falls short of our main duty, makes us no good Christians. And not only bare hearing, but take this hearing with all the advantages of it, that are short of practice; all make it but a defective duty, such as will fail us, and be unprofitable unto us.

It may be we will grant, that the bare, outward, bodily, hearing of the Word, may be justly reproveable; but yet we think to make it good, if our hearing be qualified, and attended with some commendable conditions, which we hope will be

be accepted, and stand us in some stead: As,

Serm. 1.

1. If it be a diligent Hearing, constant, and assiduous; if we frequent the House of God, miss not any opportunity of hearing the Word, that we hope will go for good Service, and stand us in some stead: if we be such as St. James speaks of, *Verse 19. Celeres ad audiendum, Swift to hear*, in season, and out of season, upon all occasions. Indeed such as are backward to this duty, seldom setting themselves to be instructed, often estranging themselves from the service of God; such as make this duty to give place to every avocation, or Worldly business, their hearing we grant is to little purpose. Nay, not only such Backwardness is sinful, but even a diligent frequenting of this Duty, such as will miss no occasion, but will wait daily at Wisdoms doors, yet, if they rest in that, their Religion is Vain. St. Paul tells of some that are *always learning*, and so would be taken for devout Christians, and yet he passeth an hard censure upon them. And Christ telleth us of such who could affirm, they were his constant Auditors, heard him daily preach in their Synagogues, and yet they come short of Heaven; our Saviour tells them plainly, *He knows them not*. Will you see what Christ saith to a very forward, and diligent Auditor, that frequented his Preaching, *Luke 12. 1. There were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, in so much that they trod one upon another*; Here was great Forwardness, a full Congregation; Well, what is the Lesson he commends to them? He saith to them, *Beware of Hypocrisie*; All this Diligence, and Forwardness, may be so far from sound Piety, that that may be no better than gross Hypocrisie. So then, bare Hearing, though it be diligent, and assiduous, will not go for good Service.

2. What if it be Hearing with some Proficiency, when we so hear as that we understand, and grow in knowledge, and our mind is edified, such as do as Christ bid them do, *Hear and understand*, *Matth. 13. 10.* or, as he speaks, *Mark 13. 14. Let him that readeth, understand*, such an hearing, we trust will serve the turn. Indeed, to be always learning, and yet never to come to the knowledge of the truth, as St. Paul complains of some Dullards, *2 Tim. 3. 7.* such as he reproves, *Heb. 5. 11.* that are *Segnes auribus, Dull of hearing*; still remaining unskilful in the word of righteousness; have Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept, and yet no Proficiency; such as the Psalmist complains of, that after long teaching, *still err in their hearts, that have not known Gods ways*, *Psal. 95.* that are wise to do evil, but to do well have no knowledge; Such Hearers we grant are unprofitable, they can reap no good by it. Nay, not only such, but if thou beest an understanding, and in that way, a proficient Auditor, attainest to a great measure of knowledge in the mysteries of Religion; such as St. Paul describes, *Rom. 2. 18, 19, 20. One, who knowest Gods will, and art instructed out of the Law, that canst be a guide of the blind, a light of them that are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, and hast the form of knowledge, and of truth in the law*; yet, even this great progress in knowledge, if thou stoppest there, will stand thee in no stead. Wert thou able to understand all Mysteries, to resolve all doubts, to clear all difficulties in the Scripture; dost thou understand all that's preach'd, remember all talk of it to others, and instruct them in it; 'tis much: but yet thou art but an unprofitable Hearer for all this. Hell is full of such Auditors; beware of it, even this Hearing, with Proficiency in knowledge, if thou go no further, will fail thee at last.

3. But what if our hearing, go another step further, and so it be an affectionate Hearing, that we hear the word with great warmth of affection, sure then we are past danger; such kind of Hearing will go for current, and be well accepted.

1. If we bring with us to our hearing of the Word, the affection of reverence; Indeed that's exceeding lovely. A reverend Auditor is a comely Creature in Gods Church; he beautifies the Congregation, and makes it honourable. As for drowzy, and heedless, and prophane Auditors, such as with the same spirit hear Gods word, as they would hear any common Discourse; the Church, and the Market-place is all one to them, they shew no awful demeanour in hearing Gods Word, we cry shame of them; such are blots, and spots in our Congregations:

Serm. I. But if we come with reverence into Gods House, listen as to the voice of God with reverence and fear, compose our selves to such a deportment, as may suit with that sacred work which we are about; we hope that will pass for a full discharge of our duty, and make us good Christians beyond exception. No verily Reverend Hearing, without Religious Practising, is but mocking of God. The Son that *Christ* speaks of in the Gospel, *Matth.* 21. 28. when his Father bid him go work in his Vineyard, heard him, and answered him very reverently, *said to him forthwith, I go Sir*; but that was all. He gave his Father, a regardful, and reverend answer, but for all that, he went not, and is condemned for it. So the young man in the Gospel, that in all the haste would needs be a Disciple of *Christ*, demean'd himself to *Christ* exceeding reverently, *Mark* 10. 17. *He came running, and fell down on his knees to Christ, and calls him Good Master, and desires to be instructed of him*; but that was all. For when *Christ* enjoyns him what to do, he turns his back upon our Saviour, refused to obey him. So then, a reverend hearing will not suffice, if it stops there, and comes short of practising,

2. What if we bring with us another commendable affection in our hearing, the affection of joy, and gladness, and delight in Hearing? That is much indeed; we hope that will be accepted. As for those, who are listless in this Duty who have no appetite, find no relish, taste no sweetness in the word of God, we condemn them for unworthy Auditours; such as call the Word of the Lord, *A Burthen*, as they did in the Prophet *Jeremiah's* time. It was a by-word with them so to taunt the Prophets *What is the burthen of the Lord?* *Jer.* 23. Or like those whom the Prophet *Malachi* complains of, *Chap.* 1. 13. they cried out, *What a weariness is it to serve the Lord!* they snuffed at it. Or, as those in *Amos* his time, *Chap.* 8. 5. who would fain be rid of the days of Gods worship, saying, *When will the New Moon be gone, and the Sabbath,* that we may fall to our work again? Such kind of Auditours have little hope to find mercy, or acceptance with God. Nay, not only such, but thou mayst hear the word of God with joy, and much pleasure account the Sabbath a delight; and yet if thou restest there, and failest in point of practice, and obedience, thy Religion is vain. *Ezekiel* met with such kind of Auditours, who took great delight in hearing him preach, *Chap.* 33. 32. *Lo, saith God to Ezekiel, thou art unto them as a very lovely song, of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, for they hear thy words, and do them not.* Oh! they were much taken with *Ezekiel's* Sermons, they were as Musick to them, sweet aires, delicate strains, they were ravished with his eloquence, but that was all, the Musick is ended, and so was all their Devotion.

Thus our Saviour compares some sort of Auditours to *stony ground*. And what are they? *Such as hear the word, and with joy receive it*; but it never takes root, or fructifies with them, *Matth.* 13. *The seed rots under the clods*, as the Prophet *Joel* speaks, *Chap.* 1. 17. Such Auditours were the High Priests Officers, who were sent to apprehend *Christ*, they were transported with his Heavenly Sermons, *Never man spake, as this man speaks*, *Joh.* 7. 46. but yet fell short of Salvation. Nay, *Herod*, as wicked a man as he was, was much delighted in *John Baptist's* preaching, *Mark* 6. 20. 'tis said, *He feared John*, accounted him an holy man, observed him, and heard him gladly; and yet *Herod* was a Reprobate for all that. 'Tis *S. Augustine's* Question, *Nunquid omnes qui delectantur, mutantur?* Mistake not, saith he; *Delectare, suavitatis est; sed flectere, victoria.* There is that sweetness in the word of God which may much delight us; but then the word hath got a full conquest over us, when it bowes and bends us to the obedience of it. That's a second; Hearing with delight is not the thing that God accepts, if it falls short of Practice.

3. But what if this hearing of the word of God doth so much affect us, that it begets many good motions in us; and we find our selves inwardly wrought upon, many good thoughts and purposes are stirred up, and quickned in us; then we conclude, we are right-good Auditours, and have heard to purpose. Indeed, those

those that are never affected, or moved with all that they hear, dead-hearted men, *Serm. I.* not all the words in Gods Book can so much as stir them; such as *Christ* speaks of *Matth. 11. 17.* *We have piped unto you, and you have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and you have not wept;* the Promises cannot allure them, the Threatnings of Gods word cannot affright them; brawny-hearted men, nothing can enter into them; No hope of such men. Ey, but we you should know, are other-ghes men, are much taken at a Sermon; when we hear God thundering out judgments, we tremble at them; when he offers his Promises, we are much affected with them; and for his Commandments we purpose to observe them; Is not this sufficient? No, even such kind of Hearers, if they proceed no further, will fall short of Heaven. A man may be in that condition that *Capernaum* was, even lifted up to Heaven sometimes, upon some good motions, and yet for all that, with *Capernaum* be cast down to Hell. *Balaam* had his devout wishes, very Heavenly raptures. and yet a Cast-away, *Agrippa* had a great pang of devotion at *S. Paul's* Sermon; he was well-nigh a Christian on the sudden; but nothing came of it. *Felix* was much wrought upon by *S. Paul's* preaching; it made him to tremble, and quake, but he proved a Reprobate.

A man may be Sermon-sick, and have a qualm come over his conscience, and some gripes of remorse, and yet recover again his old sinful temper, and never be converted, *Non concipi tantum sufficit, sed & nasci.* saith *S. Augustine.* 'Tis not the conceptions, but the birth of the new man that makes us Christians. These conceptions may prove abortive; like the untimely fruit of a woman, never see the Sun. Ye may have sudden flashes, good moods, passionate wishes, nay purposes, and good intendments at the hearing of Gods Word, and yet ye may miscarry. Many good purposes have been thought on, and yet the men who made them are in Hell. 'Tis not purposes, but performances that will bring us to Heaven.

We have done with the second, *Prohibitio officii erronei*; bare Hearing, though accompanied with many good qualities, will not do it.

We come to the next; that is,

III. *Injunctio officii debiti*; *Be doers of the word.* And here comes in the Conjunction of both duties, *Hearing, and Doing.* These put together, make up a good Christian. Still ye shall find the Scripture puts these two together, *Hearing and Doing, Dent. 5. 28, 29.* *This people have well said, all that they have spoken; O that there were such an heart in them, that they would keep all my Commandments always.* And so again, *Vers. 1.* *Hear, O Israel, the Statutes, and Judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them.* And this is not only the voice of the Law, but of the Gospel too; Not only *Moses*, but *Christ*, is for doing. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them, John 13. 17.*

And great reason there is for this Conjunction, to keep these two duties close, and undivided, *Hearing, and Doing*; to know, and to perform. Not to hear, nor know, breeds a blind Religion; we would be doing, but we know not what. To know, and not to do, breeds a lame Religion: we see our way, but we walk not in it. Both are requisite to true Religion. *That the Soil be without knowledge, it is not good, Prov. 19. 2.* And if it hath knowledge, without practice, 'tis never a whit the better. For, as the bare knowledge of evil, if we do not practise it, makes us never the worse: so the knowing of good, if we do not practise it, makes us not the better.

1. The nature of Religion requires it. What is Religion? Where in consists it? It is not a matter of contemplation, but of action; 'tis an operative practice virtue. It is an art of holy living. It begets not a speculative knowledge swimming in the brain, but works devotion, and obedience in the heart and life. 'Tis not a doctrine of words, and names, as *Gallio* prophanely mis-termed Christianity; *Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus,* saith *Tertullian.* Christians are not talkers, but doers. 'Tis not a verbal profession, but matter of practice and action.

2. The Author of Religion, is represented in Scripture, not as a Teacher

Serm. 1. or Doctor only, but as a Commander, and Law-giver. *There is one Law-giver, saith St. James, who is able to save, and to destroy; Chap. 4. 12. So the Prophet Isaiah, Chap. 33. 22. The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King. A King, a Law-giver, a Judge; words importing, and requiring duty, and obedience, and practice of us.*

3. The Subject of Religion wherein it is placed, is not so much the knowing part of our Soul, as the active and practical part, the will and affections, which are the spring of practice. Religion, 'tis never rightly seated, till it be settled in the heart; and from that flow the issues of life. Wisdom calls for the Heart, *Prov. 23. My Son, give me thy Heart. I Wisdom, dwell with Prudence, Prov. 8. 12. Prudence, that looks to practice.*

4. That Religion is an holy art of life and practice, the summary description of Religion in Scripture shews us. 'Tis called a doctrine according to godliness, *1 Tim. 6. 3. 'Tis called the mystery of godliness, 1 Tim. 3. 16. a mystery, teaching us to be godly. 'Tis called a form of sound words in faith and love, 2 Tim. 1. 13. 'Tis an exercise of keeping a good Conscience towards God and man, Acts 24. 16. all matters of practice. Now, practical truths are best learned by practice; their goodness is best known by use and performance: As a rich and costly garment appears then most comely and beautiful, not when the Work-man hath made it, but when it is worn, and put upon our body ('tis St. Chrysostom's Similitude) *Sic Dei mandata pulchra sunt cum exponuntur, multo autem pulchriora cum implentur*; So, saith he, the Scripture appears glorious, when it is by the Preacher Expounded, but far more Glorious when by the people it is obeyed, and performed.*

Without this doing and practising what we hear, all our hearing and learning is but in vain: As eating of meat, except by the heat of the stomach it be digested, and convey'd into all the parts of the body, will never support life; so, it is not receiving the Word into our Ears, but the transmitting of it into our lives that makes it profitable. Nay, hearing, and knowing, makes us much the worse, if it ends not in doing; as meat taken into the stomach, if not well digested, will breed Diseases. Thus saith S. James, *Chap. 4. 17. To him that knows to do good, and doth it not, to him it is sin*, that is, saith St. Chrysostom, *Cibum sumentis, & non digerenti, morbus est*; 'tis as he that eats meat out of a false stomach, and never concocts it, to him it breeds sickness.

We have seen the duty. Now follows,

Secondly, the danger, if we fail in this duty; What's that? The Apostle tells us, *We deceive our own selves*; that's the mischief; we run into a gross foul error, which will prove exceeding prejudicial and hurtful to us. And the force of this will appear in these three resolutions of it;

1. They are deceived; that's evil.
2. They are self-deceived; and that's worse.
3. They deceive themselves in a matter of the greatest moment and consequence, and that which doth most of all concern us; and that is worst of all.

First, They are deceived, foully mistaken, who place all their Religion in bare hearing, let go all practice. They run into a double deceit?

1. They are deceived in their Opinion.
2. They are deceived in their Expectation.

Now, the Philosopher tells, that, of all Errors, two are the worst;

1. *Error circa primum principium*;
 2. *Error circa ultimum finem*. And both these are here incurred;
1. Deceived in his Opinion of hearing the Word, that's *Principium*.
 2. Deceived in his Expectation; that's *Finis*.

I. They suffer a Deceit in their Opinion, run into a gross Error. And that's a misery, were there no more but that in it. Man, naturally, is a knowing creature, abhors to be mistaken. *Errare, labi, decipi*, 'tis an infelicity to an understanding creature. As S. Augustine saith, He hath known many that love

love to deceive others ; but to be deceived themselves, he never knew any.

Now, they who think hearing of the Word is sufficient, without doing and practising, they shew, they utterly mistake the very nature and purpose of Gods Word ; the use and benefit whereof is all in practice.

Serm. I.

1. The Word of God, 'tis call'd a Law ; *Give ear, O Israel, to my Law.* When the King proclaims a Law to be observed, shall we think him a good Subject, who listens to it, or reads it over, or copies it out, or discourses, and talks of it, but never thinks, or cares to observe and obey it.
2. The Word of God is called *Seed*. Were it not a gross error for an Husbandman to buy Seed-corn and store it up, and then let it lie, and never go about to sowe his Land with it?
3. The Word, it is called *Meat*, and nourishment. Is not he foully deceived, who, when he comes to a Feast, will look upon what is set before him, commend it, or taste it only, and then spit it out, and never feed of it ; Is this to feast it, only to look upon it and never feed on it?
4. Saint James calls the Word, *A Looking-glass*. A Looking-glass is to shew our spots, and what is a mis in us. Is not he deceived, who thinketh it is only to gaze into, and never takes notice of any uncomeliness, to amend, and rectifie it?
5. The Word, it is the Physick of the Soul, *The Balm of Gilead*. Is not he deceived, that shall take the prescript of a Physician, and think all is well if he reads it, and lays it up by him, or puts it in his pocket, and makes no other use of it?
6. The Word, it is called, *The Counsel of God*. What a vanity is it to listen to good counsel, and never to follow it? Such, and more than such, are the errors and deceits that empty and bare hearers incur, if they do not practise it?

And this miscarriage, that they run into error, and are foully mistaken is a just punishment proper and pertinent unto them who will be only hearers, and knowers of Religion only.

1. They are punish'd *In eo quod affectant*. They aim only at knowledge and rest in that, it is just they should be punished in that which they so much affected ; that they should fail in that which they only aimed at. Instead of knowledge, they are fallen into error. What saith St. Paul of such Gnosticks, who are all for knowing? He tells them plainly they are mistaken, *They know nothing as they ought to know*, 1 Cor. 8. 2. Instead of sound knowledge, they get a knowledge falsely so called, 1 Tim. 6. 20. *Take heed how ye hear*, saith Christ, *for from him that hath not (that is, no practise with his hearing) shall be taken from him, even that which he seems to have ; 'tis but a seeming knowledge*. No, saith Christ, *He that will do my Fathers will, he shall know it*, and none but he. For others, *Because they receive not the love of the truth (and love is a practise)* therefore they are given over to errors.
2. They are punished, *In eo quod ostentant* ; and that is a fit punishment ; These hearers, they pride themselves in knowledge, they boast of their skill in the Law ; they are the only knowing Christians, none but they ; As their Forefathers the Pharisees spake, *Are we also deceived, and blind ?* John 9. 40. They are justly gull'd and mistaken. Saint Peter tells them, such as are unfruitful in their knowledge, *are blind, and cannot see afar off* ; they have forgotten, and mistaken themselves ; they are punished in that whereof they boasted.
3. They are punished, *In eo quod imponunt aliis*. 'Tis just, such hearers should be deceived. These hypocritical hearers aim at deceiving of others. If they can make a shew of godliness, blear other mens Eyes, that's the upshot of their Religion, not to be, but to seem religious. 'Tis just that deceivers should be deceived ; Impostors in Religion should themselves

Serm. 1.

selves be mistakers, and so have St. Paul's Speech fulfilled in them, *πλανῶντες, ὑπλανώμενοι, deceiving, and being deceived.*

II. As they are deceived in their Opinion, so they are deceived in their Expectation. These Christians that are all Ears, and no Hands; hearers, not doers; they promise great matters to themselves, Gods favour, and Heaven it self; and hope to do as well as the most laborious practisers. Vain men! how will they be deceived, and disappointed of their hopes? Their hope will make them ashamed, as St. Paul speaks. *The hypocrites hope, saith Solomon, shall be like the House of a Spider; they have been but Cop-Web Christians, no solidity in their Religion, and their expectation shall be as slight and slender, swept away, and come to nothing. These weave the Spiders Web, but their Webs shall not become garments, Isai. 59. 5, 6. Our Saviour shews how they will plead for Heaven upon their hearing-Religion, Luke 12. Lord, Lord, open to us, we have eat, and drunk in thy presence we have heard thee preach in our streets; how will they be confounded, when they shall see their great forwardness in hearing will do them no good, and find that they lay claim to salvation upon unsufficient evidences that will stand them in no stead? They that sow the wind, shall reap the Whirlwind, Hof. 8. 7.*

That's the first evil Consequence, They are deceived.

Secondly, They are self-deceived; that's a second mischief, and that is worse. *Malim errare, quam fallere*, saith Tertullian; 'Tis ill to be deceived; but to be Authors of our own errors and disappointments, to deceive our selves, that's a double misery. These hypocritical Christians, *they deceive themselves.* They think to deceive others, but upon the issue they will find they most of all deceive themselves.

1. They think to deceive God, to beguile him with their empty shows of devotion: As *Ananias and Sapphira* meant to put him off with half they had promised him, and to bear him in hand with a lie, that they had paid him all. Now, God found it out presently, and it cost them dear. What saith St. Paul to these Hearers, that would serve God on free-coft, Hear his Ministers, but withhold their maintenance? *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he reap, Gal. 6. 7.* Empty services, shall have empty rewards. Thou wouldst Hear him, but not Obey him; he will Hear thee too, but he will not Answer thee.

2. They think to deceive the Minister, put him off with a bare Hearing, and listening to what he says; and they hope to be esteem'd by him for his best Auditors, and the forwardest Christians: As *Gehazi* thought to carry it cunningly, and to delude *Elisha*, but it will be found they will cozen themselves. *Isaiab* met with such Auditors; complain'd he had labour'd in vain, spent his strength to no purpose; but *my work is with my God*; he will reward him. Though the sick Patient die, yet the Physician hath his Fee, is paid for his pains. The Minister is not deceived.

3. They think to deceive their Neighbours, and by their seeming-forwardness to delude them. Well, that Imposture holds not always. There is never a counterfeit Creeple, but is sometimes seen walking without his Crutches. The Hypocrites Vizard will sometime or other fall from his face, and then he will appear in his true colours. But suppose they be not discover'd, yet the matter is not great; the mistakes and errors of Charity are seldom culpable, but most what commendable. The hypocrite, in the long run, will be found, above all, to have deceived himself. And that's the greatest deceit, and most uncomfortable. There is some excuse to be over-reached by others, it makes the sin or error, more pardonable; but who will pity him that cozens himself? That's one reason why the sin of the lapsed Angels was not pardonable, as was the sin of *Adam*. The Devils misguided themselves, our first Parents were deceived by the Serpent. Nay, such self-deceivers, they act a double part in sinning, and so shall undergo a double portion in punishment. The mis-leaders and mis-led (saith Christ) shall

shall both fall into the ditch. Here one man doth both evils, and so shall suffer a *Serm. I.*
double damnation.

That's the second, They are self-deceived.

Thirdly, They deceive themselves in a matter of the greatest moment and consequence; and that's worst of all; we over-reach our selves in the greatest business, in the matter of our souls: And such a deceit as this, hath these three Aggravations;

1. 'Tis *Maximè pudenda deceptio*; 'tis a most shameful couzenage: Slight oversights are more excusable, but to mis in the greatest business, that's most ridiculous. *Mala emptio, semper ingrata est.* Every man laughs at him who is penny-wise, and pound-foolish; and twits him with his over-sights, and upbraids him with them: This is the man who is cunning in trifles, but grossly deceiving himself in Soul-business; How shameful is that; S. James lays load on this folly, chap. 1. 26. *This man deceives his own heart, his Religion is vain.* O! vanity and deceit in our Religion, to be mistaken in that weighty business, 'tis a most shameful deceit!

2. 'Tis *Damnosissima deceptio*; he brings upon himself the most costly deceit; the greatest loss, the loss of Salvation, that's an inestimable loss, *Error circum ultimum finem.* The Prophet *Ezekiel* cries out of these deceits, denounces a wo unto them, *Ezekiel 3. 9. Wo be unto them, they have rewarded evil unto their souls.* Oh, the deceits of sin are deadly. *Sin deceived me, and slew me, Rom. 7. 11.*

3. 'Tis *Irreparabilis deceptio*, that adds to the Aggravation; 'tis an irrecoverable deceit. Other mistakes may be rectified, and regained; but he who cheats himself of his own soul, and his heavenly inheritance, is undone for ever. That's the woful error that will never be fetch'd about again. 'Tis like *Esaie's* bad bargain, when he cheated himself of his Birth-right for a mess of Pottage; he could not recover it *Though he sought it with tears.* To have all our thoughts to perish, all our imaginations and hopes of going to heaven, to be a meer delusion; not to be mistaken in some particulars, but in the end to be a fool! *Jer. 17. 15. Oh this is a bitter reproach when God calls us fools. Sure heaven was never made for fools. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight, Psal. 5. 4.*

SERMON

Philip. i. 27.

Only let your conversation be, as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the Faith of the Gospel.



THE Context is an affectionate Protestation of S. Paul's Love to the *Philippians*. He assures them of his love to them, and of his care for them. The Apostle was even now in an holy ardency of spirit, rapt up into Heaven, longing to be dissolved and to be with Christ, *Verse 23*. Yet see his Charity and love to Christ's Church; when he thinks of them, he checks and abates his former desire. For the furtherance of Gods people, and for the promoting of their Salvation, he is content, yea willing, and desirous to keep out of Heaven, to forbear those joys; and prefers their spiritual welfare, before his own present happiness, and salvation, *Verse 24*.

See what an high pitch of Piety and Grace, St. Paul hath attained unto. A little to insist upon the Context. Ye may observe many remarkable evidences, and degrees of his piety in this passage of Scripture.

1. He hath attained to a strong assurance of his future happiness, and bliss; he knows his dissolution shall be a translation of him into a blessed condition; death shall prove to him a great advantage, *Verse 21*. To die, is gain to him. It is an high improvement of piety to attain to this Christian Confidence, and Assurance. No doubt, it cost St. Paul much pains and labour to work his heart to this holy confidence, to be perswaded, that Death (which a Worldly Man accounts the utmost loss) should bring to him the greatest gain.

There are, who talk of their assurance of Salvation; but it is to be feared, In many 'tis but imaginary, a groundless presumption; in others, it is but intellectual and notional, inferred and gathered haply by way of argument and discourse, and so goes no further than a speculative Conclusion. But this of St. Paul, 'tis cordial, and affectionate, and experimental, the fruit of many Prayers, and holy endeavours. And such an Assurance is rare to be found. 'Tis that hidden Manna which few taste of; *Osculum Spiritus Sancti*, that Kiss of love and peace, which God bestows on his devout and dearest Favorites. It costs a great deal of searching, and religious labouring, ere we can find it. *Nesciunt quantis gemitibus, & lachrymis confet*, saith St. Aug. Happy are they, who after long seeking, can at length attain to it. Ye see St. Paul hath found it. That's the first.

2. A second pitch of Piety in St. Paul, is not only that he hath attained to a bare contentment, but a great willingness, yea more than so, an earnest longing to die, and to be dissolved, *Verse 23*. That's a further, and higher degree and growth of piety. It argues much strength of Faith, a great prevailing of grace, to sigh and groan in our selves till we be dissolved. This St. Paul professes of himself, and such as he was, *Rom. 8. 23*. We that have the first-fruits of the Spirit, we groan within our selves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

bodies. And so again, 2 Cor. 5. 8. *We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.* Serm. I

It is well with us, we think, if we can with much ado work our selves to any tolerable contentment to die, and to leave the World. We account it a great mastery over our selves, if, after much struggling, and resisting, we at length submit to that necessity, and yield to death. But *Paul* is not here barely content to die, but longs for that blessed hour, judges it best of all to be dissolved, and to be with *Christ*, Verse 23. *O, when shall I appear before the presence of God,* 2 Cor. 5. *In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed with our House which is from Heaven.* St. *Aug.* tells us of Christians of the weaker, and more imperfect sort; Such (saith he) desire and long to live; but yet are content to die, if God see it fit: But other more grown and spiritual Christians (and such an one was blessed *Paul*) though they be content to live, yet they wish, and desire, and long to die. The former, have *mortem in patientia, vitam in desiderio*, they die patiently, but would live, willingly; the other, as *S. Paul* here, they have *vitam in patientia, & mortem in desiderio*; this life, it is the matter of their patience, but a blessed death is the matter of their desire. That's the second.

3. See here, in *S. Paul*, an higher degree, and growth of Piety;

1. Having gained this great Confidence, and assurance of Heaven; And,

2. His Soul panting and longing for the enjoyment of it; yet, that he may do God more service, and promote the spiritual estate and welfare of his Church, he can be content to delay those enjoyments, to forbear his Salvation, to keep out of Heaven, to be serviceable to the Church. *Desiderat requiem, sed non recusat laborem.* He could wish he were at rest; but yet for all that, he is willing to labour still, and to travel in his Ministry. And what that was, ye may easily guess.

In those times to be a faithful Preacher of the Gospel, was to be no less than a Martyr. Well, *S. Paul* hath counted the cost, forcast the worst; Pains, Poverty, Persecutions, he can endure them all for the love of *Christ*, and for the good of his Church. He chooses to suffer all sorts of miseries, and afflictions, so he may be serviceable to *Christ*, useful to his Church, rather than to leave that holy Work undone, and to enter into Heaven. *S. Augustine* makes it a tryal of our love to God, if, when God should put the offer to our choice, Live as ye list, satisfie every lust, deny your self nothing, I will never punish you for it, *Sed non videbis faciem meam*, only you shall not see my face; if we refuse that offer of outward enjoyments, that we may be partakers of that blessed Vision, 'tis a good argument of our love to God. Here is a greater trial of *S. Paul's* love to *Christ*; Wilt thou presently enjoy me in Heaven, or still serve me on Earth? Wilt thou for my sake keep out of Heaven? Nay, more than so, undergo Pains, suffer Persecutions, for my Churches good? Yes, *S. Paul* accepts of this employment on Earth, and will forbear his preferment in Heaven. O *Paul*! great is thy love to *Christ*, and to his Church. Thus *S. Chrysostom*, and *S. Bernard*, express this choice of *S. Paul*: As if a poor Woman should stand at the door of some great Palace, wherein are all kinds of Pleasures and Delights; and being without, cold, and hungry, should be offered her self to come in, but to leave her Children without in the cold, there to lie in want and misery; though she would fain be within, yet she refuses that offer, chooses rather to stay still in the cold to tend her Children, than to part with them, and enter in. So *Paul* here, had rather stay out of Heaven, than forsake those Babes in *Christ*, whom he had begotten to the Gospel. Not only, as *Moses*, he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin; but, rather than to enjoy the happiness of Heaven. Nay, see the fervency of his love to the people of God, *Rom. 9. 3.* *He could wish himself Anathema*, separated and accursed from *Christ* for ever, for his Brethrens sake, that he might gain them to God; not only forbear Heaven for a season, but forgo it for ever, that others may gain it.

4. This he desires and this he hopes for, still to be continued to them for the furtherance of their Faith. And yet that being liable to uncertainty. Saint *Paul* not knowing how long God would hold him to this work, employ him

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in this service; uncertainty of life, that's one hazard, he was in death often; and then many vexations, and distractions intervening in his Apostolical Function: the care of all the Churches lying upon him: See here a fourth pitch of Piety, his great care, and solicitude he hath of their well-doing, and growing in grace, however God disposes of him by life or death, yet his desires are, that they should do well: This would be his main comfort and crown, of rejoycing to see being present, to hear being absent, that they grow in grace, and that his labours amongst them might not prove in vain. *Only let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the Faith of the Gospel.*

The Words than which I have read unto you, are S. Paul's Apostolical, and Fatherly Charge, and Caveat to the *Philippians*. In it observe these three particulars;

1. Is the weight and greatness of this Charge; the Caveat he gives to them is very ponderous; that's implied in this emphatical word, *μόνον*, *only*.

2. Is the extent and largeness of that Charge; it hath no stint, or limitation, it reaches to all seasons, and occasions;

1. His presence, and abode with them.

2. His absence, or being from them, *Whether I come and see you, or else be absent.*

3. Is the Charge it self, and that's manifold; It consists of a threefold Injunction, which he lays upon them:

1. Is *Sancta conversatio*; an holy and Christian-like conversation; *Let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ.*

2. Is *Sancta concordia*; unanimity, and concord, and the spirit of peace; *That in all their affairs, they should stand in one spirit, and in one mind.*

3. Is *Sancta constantia*; an holy resolution, and constancy, and courage for the truth, *Striving together for the faith of the Gospel.*

1. In themselves, Holiness.

2. Amongst themselves, Peace,

3. Against the enemies of the Gospel, Courage, and Resolution.

First, Here is considerable, the weight, and greatness of this charge which he gives them; *Only*; As if he should say, 'Tis *καθ' ὅσον τῶν ἐπιμελειῶν*, as he elsewhere speaks, tis the main and cheif charge I lay upon you the upshot and sum of all my Exhortations; let this saying sink deep into your hearts, mind this, and remember it above all things, that your conversation be Christian-like, suitable to the Gospel, live in peace, and concord, contend earnestly for the Faith which is committed to you. And then the strength, and Emphasis of this word will appear to you in these two expressions;

1. *Only*; tis *Summum votum meum*; Of all my desires, this is the cheif; of all my prayers, and studies, and requests, this is the main, and summ of them all, That you live as Christians.

Observe the true spirit of Paul, and such as he was; the spiritual good, and growth in grace of them that are committed to them, is their main desire and care, the height of their wishes. S. Paul preferred their well-doing, before the care and thoughts for himself. He had even now spoken of his own life and death; but he breaks off that discourse with this more serious exhortation. As if he should say, Let God dispose of me as he pleaseth; that which goes nearest my heart, and doth take up my thoughts, is, that you may prosper, and grow in grace; and this hath been the temper, or rather the zeal of all Gods faithful Prophets and Servants. Moses, how did his spirit burn in him for his peoples good? *Blot me out of thy Book; only be gracious unto thy people, do not cast them off.* He had rather God should destroy him than them. S. Chrysostom saith, That speech of Moses was a greater wonder than all the miracles he wrought in Egypt. It was much in David, to say, *Spare these Sheep, and let thine hand be upon Me*; they were

were Innocents, he was the Offender; but in *Moses* his speech, the people were the offenders, he was most innocent, and yet he prays, Destroy me, but spare them. So *Samuel*, though unkindly, and ungratefully dealt withal by the people, yet, *God* forbid, saith he, that I should cease praying for you. The Prophet *Jeremiah* was so earnest with God for the Jews, that God is fain to forbid his importunity; Pray not for this people. The Apostle *S. John* professeth, it was his greatest comfort, to see his Disciples thrive in grace. I have no greater joy than to hear that my Children walk in the truth, *Epist.* 3. 4. *S. Peter*, how doth he make it his main care, to further the salvation of the people of God? *2 Pet.* 1. 12. I will not be negligent to put you in remembrance of these things, *Vers.* 13. As long as I am in this Tabernacle, I will stir you up: nay I will endeavour, that after my absence, you may remember these things; Like another *Elias*, who prepared an Epistle before his departure out of this World, to be sent to the King of *Judah*, who should reign afterwards, *2 Chron.* 21. 12.

It adds to the joys of Gods servants in Heaven, that their people are proficient in the ways of piety. And it seems by the Apostle, it abates of their comfort, if their people miscarry. That they may give an account of you with joy, and not with grief, *Heb.* 13. 17. Why so? If they have done their duties, though the people miscarry, yet they shall be rewarded: the Physician hath his Fee, though the sick mandies. True, true; but yet sorry he is, that he could not recover him. Above all, *St. Paul* is most abundant in these gracious expressions. How earnestly doth he pray for the Churches, to whom he writes? *Ephe.* 1. 16. I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers. Again, *Ephe.* 3. 14. For you I bow my knees, to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *Phil.* 1. 9. I pray that your love may abound more and more, *Colos.* 1. 9. I cease not to pray for you, and to desire that you may walk worthy of the Lord, *1 Thes.* 3. 12. The Lord increase you, and make you to abound in love. And again, Now the very God of peace, sanctify you throughout.

Indeed, this care for the Church, took up *Paul's* heart, and life; he forgot all other things in respect of that;

1. It was the aim and intendment of all his pains and labours. We do all things for your edification, *2 Cor.* 12. 19.

2. It was the sum of all his cares; The care of all the Churches lay upon him, *2 Cor.* 11.

3. It was the sum of all his desires; *Phil.* 1. 8. God is my record, how greatly I long after you in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

4. It was the matter of all his joy; *Phil.* 4. 1. My brethren, dearly beloved, and longed for, my joy and crown.

5. It was the matter of all his sorrow. The disorderly conversation of some Christians, writing tears from his eyes; I tell you weeping; they are snarves to the Cross of Christ, *Phil.* 3. 18.

6. It was the end of all his sufferings; I endure all things for the Elects sake, that they may obtain salvation, with eternal Glory, *2 Tim.* 2. 10.

7. It was his very life to him, to see them do well; Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord, *1 Thes.* 3. 8.

8. It was the matter of all his thankfulness; What thanks can we render unto God for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before God, *Vers.* 9. That's the first expression of this Only, 'tis *Volunt. Apostoli*.

This Emphatical word, *Only*, admits of another expression, it notes *Summum officium populi*, the greatness of the duty which he charges upon them; which is a holy, and Gospel-like life, and conversation. Take it in these three Expressions;

1. This duty is *Summe necessarium*; 'tis a duty of the greatest necessity, which he doth so earnestly call upon them for. Men lay not this load and weight of intreaty upon perfunctory services that are but of slight concernment; and more indifferent. Thus we find this manner of speech used in the Scripture; Be not afraid, only believe, *Mark* 5. And again, *Luke* 8. Believe only, and he shall be made

Sermon 2. made whole. See 1 Cor. 7. Let her marry, to whom she will, only in the Lord. All these speeches are strict provisos, and shew the duty enjoined to be of great necessity. Such is the duty of the Text. An holy, and unblameable conversation; 'tis not slightly commended to us, but strictly enjoined, and upon the most absolute necessity.

1. Take it negatively; without this duty, there is no hopes of Heaven, *Eccl. 1. 14. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which, no man shall see the Lord; no Salvation without it.* Then,

2. Consider it positively; as with it no Salvation, so upon it Salvation is assured. 'Tis not a *Sine qua non* only, enough to hinder us from Heaven, if wanting; but it is an affectual condition, upon performance of which, Heaven is assured to us, *Psal. 50. 23. To him that orders his conversation aright, I will shew the Salvation of God.*

As 'tis *Summe necessarium*, so this, *Only*, imports another notion; it shews the duty of the Text, 'tis *Officium precipuum*; 'tis the only One. That's a signification of the greatest excellency, As David speaks of the Sword of Goliath, *There's none to that*; such is this duty of an holy conversation. As it is of greatest necessity, so likewise it is of greatest excellency. 'Tis both a fundamental, and a finishing grace. It lies low in the foundation, there is the necessity of it; and then it is chief in the head of the building, that's the excellency. 'Tis both a vital grace, and then it is a beautifying and adoring grace. It warms the heart, and it makes the face to shine. The Saints, saith David, *They are the excellent of the earth, Psal. 16. St. Augustine saith it of Charity, which is one part of holiness; Sure that's a rare grace, without which, all other graces are nothing; and by which, all other graces are made of some value.* This grace, 'tis the assimilating grace, which makes us like unto Christ. In this St. Peter places our conformity to Christ, *1 Pet. 1. 15. As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.* This St. John calls a walking as Christ walked, *3 John 2. 16. Walk as he walked.* How is that? not as he walked on the Waters, in a miraculous operation, but as he walked in the ways of piety, in all holy conversation; So to assimilate him.

3. This *Only*, carries another Emphasis with it; it shews the thing he exhorts to, is *Summe desideratum*, the main thing which he desires of them. 'Tis a form of expressing our chief desires and requests we make; it shews, *What above all is most acceptable to us.* As David, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, which I will also require. Unions*, is put in Scriptures for *Summe dilectus*, the only One, for, the dearly beloved. *Prov. 10. 2. I was my fathers Son, tender, and only beloved in the sight of my mother.* So *Cant. 6. 9. My Dove, she is the only one of her mother.*

Here then is the main return that St. Paul requires of all his love to them, his care for them, his labours amongst them, that their life be answerable to their holy Calling, and Profession. St. Paul's pains were great amongst them, teaching, exhorting, warning every man. What is the fruit of his labours that he expects from them? That they should express the power of his preaching, in the piety of their conversation. What is the fruit of the Husband-mans labours, his ploughing, his tilling, manuring, sowing, but to see a fruitful Harvest, the Fields crown'd with plenty, and the barns full with all manner of store? How doth the Prophet *Isaiah* bewail the loss of this fruit? *Esa. 49. 4. I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for naught.* And the Prophet *Micah* mourns for this want of fruit, *Chap. 7. 1. It is no, there is no cluster to eat, my soul desired the first ripe fruit.* We have done with the first Particular, the weight of this Charge; *Only*, Now follows,

Secondly, the Extent of this Charge; the compass that it takes; it reaches to all seasons and occasions, *Whether I come to see you, or be absent; in his Presence; and in his Absence.* It gives a scantling, and dimension to a double Duty.

Here is the dimension and scantling of St. Pauls care for them. He is not only

only studious of their good, while he is among them; but the necessary occasions of his absence are here supplied, with an earnest desire to hear well of them. Love, and the spirit of doing good, is full of care and forecast. Those whom God hath committed to our charge, should always be in our thoughts: As St. Paul speaks, 2 Cor. 7. 3. *You are in our hearts to live, and to dye, with you.* The High Priest was to have all the names of the Children of Israel engraven on his shoulders, and on his Breast-plate, Exod. 28. Aaron must bear their names before the Lord, upon his two shoulders, for a memorial, and upon his Breast-plate;

1. Upon his shoulders, never to cast off that burthen; and,
2. Upon his Breast-plate, that's the seat of love and affection.

Thus S. Paul expresses his continual watchfulness over the Colossians, Chap. 2. 5. *Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit; joying, and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.* He had not only a spirit of Revelation, by which he was acquainted with all their affairs, but he was present in spirit by his continual thoughts of them, and care for them: Thus was he always deeply affected with the Care of all the Churches. Is he present? He labours amongst them: is he absent? He prays for them, thinks of them, writes to them. As S. Ambrose saith of Zachary; *Zacharias, cum non potuit loqui, scripsit*; when he could not speak, he wrote; So doth S. Paul to the Churches. His care expressed itself in this way of putting them in remembrance by writing. He wrote more Epistles, than all the Apostles. He seems to satisfy for what he had done against the Churches. Before his Conversion, he procured, and carried Letters against them for their Persecution, Acts 9. 2. Now, he is *Spiritu Sancto ab Epistolis*, The great Secretary of Heaven, the great conveyer of Heavenly Epistles to them. And as it is in the Ministerial Function, so it should be in all our other employments. Love will be thus solicitous, both present and absent. As Jacob was for his sons, being absent, he sends to visit them: *Go, I pray, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and bring me word again.* See, he had a privy Monitor among them, that should inform him of all their miscarriages, Gen. 37. See this care of Job over his children: *It may be, my sons have sinned, and blasphemed God in their hearts; he presently sacrifices for them; Thus did Job every day.* That's the first dimension of S. Paul's care of them, both present, and absent.

2. Here is the dimension and scantling of the Philippians duty, and piety. S. Paul puts them in mind of it; that not only in his presence, when he is amongst them, then they should walk piously, and religiously, but also when he is absent and remote from them, then also he expects to hear of their holy and orderly conversation. Gods Church must be like a well-order'd family, every one in his proper station, and doing his duty, though the eye of government be not always upon them.

How doth God upbraid the failing in this point, in the people of Israel? Exod. 32. 7. *Moses was out of their sight but forty days, and presently they fall away.*

1. How respectlessly do they speak of him? *As for Moses, the man that brought us out of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.* That's all they care for him; gone he is, and fare him well. A poor requital for all his pains with them.

2. How foully do they revolt from that Truth, which he had taught them? *Make us new gods to before us.* A new Religion presently. O, what faith God to Moses? *Go get thee down, thy people have turned aside quickly out of the way.* It was the stain, and blemish, and reproach of Josiah the King of Judah; as long as good Jehojada the Priest lived and taught him, he walked in the ways of God 2 Chron. 24. 2. but when Jehojada died, Josiah his Religion died too, and he fell to Idolatry. While S. Paul himself preach'd in Galatia, O they were very forward and zealous; who but S. Paul? They esteemed him as an Angel, nay, as Christ Jesus. But if Paul discontinues from them, how suddenly are they bewitch'd

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winch'd into another Gospel? On the contrary, it was the *Philippian* honour, and just commendation, a worthy testimony *St. Paul* gives of them, *You have obeyed, not only in presence, but much more in my absence, Phil. 2. 12.*

This fickleness in our walking piously, and while some *Paul* is present; it argues, All our piety is either,

1. Counterfeit and hypocritical, all that we do is to gain a good opinion of *S. Paul*. This eye-devotion, 'tis like eye-service that the Apostle speaks of, it comes not from sincerity. Sincerity will be true in absence, as well as in presence. Or 'tis,

2. Inforced Religion for awe and fear. *S. Paul's* presence carried some sway, Impiety durst not confront, and out-face him; but if *Paul* be gone, fear will let loose the reins to disorder. *Metus, haud diuturni magister officii.* Fear, 'tis a flincher, and will soon give over. As *Pharaoh* whilst *Moses* was present, armed with judgments; then he would conform, and promise fair; but when the judgment was over, and *Moses* his back turned, *Pharaoh* revolts again. Or,

3. If such Piety arise out of some love, and liking of Religion, yet it is but superficial and groundless, it hath no bottom, or solid foundation. There is a kind of delight that men may take in the preaching of the word; there may be a great seeming forwardness, which indeed is but carnal, and with a by-respect unto some accessory thing, that accompanies the word. As it was with *Ezekiel*, his eloquence took them, *Chap. 33. Son of man, lo, thou art unto them, as a very lovely song of pipe, that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but do them not.* They make no more reckoning of a Minister when they do of a Minstrel, a fine voice, sweet airs, pleasant musick; but when the musick ceases all is gone, our delight is at an end. Or,

4. This kind of Religion is partial, and with respect to persons; and so holds no longer than those men continue with us whom we fancy, and esteem. As it was in *Corinth*; they pin'd all their Religion upon their Preachers sleeves. Some were all for *Paul*, none to him; others for *Apollo*. Thus, contrary to *St. James* his exhortation, *They have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, in respect of persons.* As one said of *Calvin* that if *Calvin* preach'd at one Church, and *S. Paul* at another, he would not leave *Calvin* to hear *S. Paul*. It is a good difference they put bewixt an human, and divine faith: An human credulity, *Credit Deo propter homines*, believes what God saith for mans testimony; but a true Christian faith, *Credit hominibus propter Deum* believes what the Preacher saith upon Gods testimony. It was a good sign the Eunuch in the *Acts* was a well-grounded believer, though *Philip* were taken away, and he saw him no more, yet he went on his journey rejoicing.

So much of the extension of the Charge. Now follows, the Charge it self. And in it the first injunction, *Let your Conversation be, as becometh the Gospel of Christ.* And herein we have two things considerable.

1. The Matter, or Object of *St. Paul's* Direction; that's, *their Conversation.*

2. The Rule of Direction, by which our Conversation must be order'd; it must be, as becomes the Gospel.

First, That concerning which *St. Paul* gives this Charge, 'tis *their Conversation*, the ordering of that aright is the duty of the Text. And of it, take a threefold Consideration.

1. This Duty here injoin'd, 'tis *Officium progressivum*; 'tis an injunction of an holy progress in the practice of Piety. By *St. Paul's* preaching, they had already attained to the first work of Christianity, a saving Conversion; they had embraced the Faith, he had laid the foundation of Religion among them; now he secunds his first pains with an earnest exhortation to a Christian Progress. These two Lessons must always go together.

2. The Doctrine of Conversion, Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord *Jesus Christ*; but that's not all we must learn.

3. The Doctrine of an holy Conversation. 2nd and only another but how 'Tis no so, purpose to lay the foundation of Piety, if we build not upon it; but

but as the Apostle speaks, *Heb. 6. We must be carried on to perfection.* As in nature, 'tis not sufficient, that life is begun, or an infant born, but he must be nourish'd up to growth and strength; so in the course of our spiritual condition, 'tis not sufficient to be renew'd, and made Christians, but we must add to the first stock of Grace, build upon the foundation; let piety have its perfect work. What saith St. Paul? *Gal. 5. 25. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.* Abraham was glad when Isaac was born, but he made a Feast, when Isaac was wean'd, *Gen. 21.* Not only glad of his birth, but joyed at his growth, *When he was wean'd from the milk, drawn from the breast, as Isaiah speak, Isai. 28. 9.*

2. This Duty here enjoined, 'tis *Officium practicum*; the ordering of our Conversation looks to practice. Indeed a practising Christian, is the only Christian. Christianity hath never its full work upon us, till it descends down from our heads into our hearts, and from thence breaks forth into our lives. Religion, 'tis *Ars practica*, not a matter of bare knowledge, and contemplation, but of doing, and practising. *If ye know these things, blessed are ye, if ye do them, Job. 13.* It never fared well with the Church, when Religion was restrained only to the knowing, and understanding part; He who could move most questions, and answer them best, understand the deepest Mysteries, should be counted the best Christian; No, saith Tertullian, *Non magna loquimur, sed vivimus.* Christianity, is not an art of disputing learnedly, or talking curiously, but of living holily. Thus St. Paul expresses it, *Tit. 3. 8. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, may be careful to maintain good works; these things are good and profitable to men;* as if he should say, Without it all your believing is vain, and unprofitable.

3. This Duty here, 'tis *Officium comprehensivum*. Conversation, 'tis a word of large Comprehension, betokens not some one Act, or Performance, but extends itself to the whole Carriage of a Christian. And so the Text inforces this Duty that a Christian must be exact in all points. Religion must bear sway in all the passages, and turnings of his life. He must be good, every way good.

1. Christianity enjoins him all kind of duties; duties to God, duties to Man, duties to Himself; makes him a servant to all; lays upon him the whole Law of holiness and righteousness, without the least dispensation or exemption from any.

2. It furnishes him with all kind of graces; it enlightens his understanding, sanctifies his heart, orders, and composes, and puts in tune all his affections. At his Conversion, the seeds of all graces are sown into him and then it expects from him every good work. A good Christian, turn him to what duty you will, he hath skill to perform it: For the worship of God, he is prepared for that; he will pray devoutly, he will hear reverently, converse with God, spiritually. Turn him to man, he will submit obediently, deal and trade justly, converse innocently, help others charitably. In his work he will be diligent; in his recreations he will be sober; in prosperity humble, in affliction patient. He will be a good master, a faithful servant, a good father, an obedient son, a loving husband; as St. Paul describes him, *Ready to every good work.* 'Tis not Christianity, to hit upon some one duty, and fail in all the rest; No, *He must walk in all the commandments of God, without reproof.* That's for the matter.

Secondly, Take notice of the Rule of Direction; according to which a Christian must order his conversation. It must be *Ætios, as becomes the Gospel of Christ.* The Rule, 'tis high and transcendent. God intends a Christian should be an exact creature, and so propounds to him an eminent Rule. A Christian must not order his life after every inferior square. Other Rules there be, which many set to themselves, but they are not suitable to the state of a Christian.

1. There is the licentious Libertine's Rule; and that is, *Quod liber liget;* to live as he list, to do what is good in his own eyes; so he can satisfy himself, that's all he cares for.

2. There is the common mans Rule, that's *Mos humanus*; that's his square,

to

Sermon I. to do as his neighbours do; live according to the custom of other men. This sways with the most *Va torrenti consuetudinis humane*. O, this is as a mighty stream bears down all before it. S. Paul calls it, *A walking according to the course of this world*, Ephes. 2. 2.

2. There is the civil mans Rule, that's *Lex humana*; to be as honest as civility, and morality, and mans law enjoyns us, not to trespass against any Law of man; more than so, is more than needs.

No, all these Rules are short, and defective; *Mensura hominis est mensura Angeli*, even in this sense also. Christianity, sets us an higher pitch. We must live answerable to the Gospel of *Christ*, suitable, and agreeable to that holy Profession. Take the sum of it in these five Expressions;

1. A Christian must live, and order his conversation, *Secundum precepta Evangelii*, according to the Doctrine and commands of the Gospel. Mans Law is too short; nay, *Moses* his Law, 'tis too dark; the Gospel doth clearly lay down the Law of holiness. The love of God, even to the loss of our lives; the love of our neighbours, even to the loving of our Enemies; these are, for their clear propounding, *Precepta Evangelica*, doctrines of the Gospel. So meekness, and patience, and bearing of the Cross, they are in a special manner, Evangelical Precepts. The two Disciples thought it enough to live as *Ethar* did, and to seek for vengeance upon their Enemies: No, *Christ*, tells them, they are called to another spirit, the spirit of the Gospel is a spirit of meekness.

2. A Christian must live, *Secundum beneficia Evangelii*, answerable to the high Prerogatives, and benefits of the Gospel. The benefit of Redemption, how should that oblige us? *We are bought with a price*. What use doth *Paul* make of that? *Glorifie God in your bodies and souls which are his. Christ died for us that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but to him which died for them*; 1 Cor. 4. 15. How doth *Jeremiah* upbraid the Jews? *Jer. 7. 10. Will ye say, we are delivered, to commit all these abominations? Do ye thus requite the Lord, ye forsake people, and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? Dent. 32. Pater vultum procreans, sed redimens*. No, our Redemption, our holy Calling, and Vocation, calls unto holiness. Our Adoption, and being made not only servants but Sons of God, they all require answerable conversation; should beget in us *St. Pauls* resolution, *Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; Whether we die, we die unto the Lord*.

3. A Christian must live, *Secundum auxilia Evangelii*, answerable to those helps and supplies of grace, which the Gospel affords us. The Gospel, 'tis the *ministration of the Spirit*, it enables us to do what it requires of us. And a Christian is purposely intended by God to be to the praise of the glory of his grace, Ephes. 1. And so again, *We are his workmanship, created to good works*, Ephes. 2. We are his Workmanship, his choice Master-piece, wherein he would have the power of his grace to be most conspicuous. And, *we are created to good works*, that is, purposed and intended to abound in good works; and again, *created to them*, that is, enabled, and fitted for them; as in the Creation every created thing was enabled to live after the kind. What saith S. Paul? *I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me*. 'Tis a shame for a Christian, not to exceed the scantlings and abilities of other men. How doth S. Paul check the *Corinthians* for their backwardness this way? *Are ye not carnal, and walk like men?* 1 Cor. 3. 3. whereas they should be spiritual, and walk like Christians.

4. A Christian must live, *Secundum dignitatem Evangelii*; so as may make for the dignity, and credit, and honour of the Gospel. The World judges of Religion by the lives of those, who do profess it; as is their conversation, accordingly do they account of their Religion. Wickedness in a Christian, 'tis blasphemy against God, 'tis as the sin of sacrilege; he robs God of the honour due to his Name. This is the aggravation of *Dauids* sin, in the matter of *Uriah*, that he gave occasion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, 2 Sam. 13. 14. So likewise God charges it upon the Jews, *Mal. 2. 11. Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord*. So St. James lays it to the charge of loose-living Christians, James 2. 7.

On 1 Corinth. 14. 1.

Serm. I.

Do they not blaspheme that worthy Name by which you are called? The sins of Christians are much more scandalous than of other men. They dishonour God, bring an evil report upon his holy Profession, shame the whole Church, and expose it to reproach. Thus St. Paul dissuading the Corinthians from all uncleanness, reminds them of that near relation, that they have to God. What? know you not that your bodies are members of Christ? And again, What, know ye not, that your bodies are Temples of the Holy Ghost? The members of Christ, they must not be polluted; the Temples of the Holy Ghost, they must not be profaned; nor must the Church of God be dishonoured by us. The lewd lives of Christians are reproaches to the whole Church, as Chrysostom observes it in the case of the incestuous Corinthian; St. Paul charges it upon the whole Church, 1 Cor. 5. 1. 'Tis reported commonly that there is fornication among you. See, saith he, he burthens the whole Church with it: As a man coming into a room, wherein is some nasty smell, saith, The whole house stinks; so the whole Church heard ill, for that one man's sin.

The honour and credit of the Gospel, is the grand motive that the Scripture uses, to call us to holiness, Ephes. 4. I beseech you walk worthy of the vocation to which you are called. Again, Ephes. 5. Walk as Children of light; and yet again, as becomes Saints, Ephes. 5. Women must behave themselves, as becomes holiness, Tit. 2. 2. Wives must so live, that the word of God be not blasphemed, Tit. 2. 5. Servants must shew all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, Tit. 2. 10. St. Peter presses this motive upon all sorts of Christians, 1 Pet. 2. 12. Have your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

5. A Christian must live, *Secundum spem Evangelii*; suitably to the blessed hope, and expectation which the Gospel brings us; A Christian, as he is of an honorable birth by his regeneration, so he is begot to a lively hope of an Heavenly Inheritance; and so must live as one who hopes for Heaven. Consider seriously of that glory that shall be revealed upon thee, think of thy Throne, thy Crown, thy white Robes, and then argue with thy self in St. Peter's language; What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness. The Scripture is earnest in this enforcement: 2 Cor. 7. 1. Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us perfect holiness in the fear of God. And as St. Paul preft it upon others, so himself practis'd it; Our conversation is in Heaven, from whence we look for a Saviour, Phil. 3. 20. Christians are to be Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, of the Household of God, of the Society of Angels; live then we must, according to the Law of our Country. When Samuel design'd Saul by his anointing, to be King over Israel, he bids him, give over seeking his Fathers Asses; another heart, a Kingly spirit was presently shed upon him. How unworthy is it for the Heirs of Heaven, to mind nothing but earthly things? Such, saith the Father, are *Fidei, & Spei sue prevaricatores*; they falsify their Faith, confute their Hope, renounce their expectation of their Heavenly Inheritance. Let St. John's Exhortation be our Conclusion; He that hath this hope in him, purifies himself, even as God is pure.

Estote non solum spe, sed conversatione caelestes, Leo.

Ὁ τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀγγέλων τῶν ἐν οὐρανῷ καθίσταται, Just. Mart. pag. 393. Quest.

3. Respons.

S E R M O N

TO THE

C L E R G Y

ON

1 Corinth. 14. 1.

Follow after Charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may Propheſie.



IT is the wisdom of Gods dispensation with his Church under both the Testaments, he founded them both, and trained them up under Promises, and Expectations. In the former, *Pater promissit Filium*. The Patriarchs and Prophets, they hoped, and longed for the Incarnation of the Son. In the founding of the second Testament, *Filius promissit Spiritum*. The Apostles, and Disciples, and the Christian Church, they expected, and waited for the descent of the Spirit. St. *Chrysostom* observes, and makes this difference: *Christ*, at his coming, he was *πρόσωπον νῆος* then the Law was accomplished, and it, with old *Simeon* died with *Christ* in his Arms, at the receiving of him; the Spirit, that is *πρόσωπον Ευαγγελίου*, that is, the fulfilling and accomplishment of the Gospel. The Spirit then, that's the portion, and expectation of Christians.

Of Christians in general; but principally, and in the first place, promised, and imparted to the Ministers, and Governours of the Church of *Christ*; and then by their Ministry conveyed to others. As St. *Jerom* distinguishing 'twixt Bishops, and Priests, *Episcopus, Patres Ecclesie generat*; *Presbyter, Filius*; so *Christ* first provides and sanctifies *Patres Ecclesie*, afterwards by them, he doth generate *filius*, the common believers. Graces and gifts in a Minister, they are virtually as much, as in multitude of auditors. They are like Seales, or Prints; one Character in them, begets the like in thousands that take impression from them. The Apostles, they first received the promise of the Spirit; they, like *Gideon's* Fleece, were moistened with this Heavenly dew, when all about them were wholly dry; by them it was derived to common Christians. S. *Augustine* compares this descent of the Spirit to the first rising of the Sun; first it enlightens the Mountains, and from them reflects into the lower Vallies; The Apostles, and Ministers, they are these holy Mountains, reflecting their Beams upon inferiour Christians. S. *Jerom* likens them to those twelve Fountains at *Elim*; other Disciples must be planted by them, and draw moisture from them, like the seventy Palm-trees.

Which makes S. *Paul* direct this passage of his Epistle touching the gifts of the Spirit, especially to the Sons of the Prophets, that aimed at the publick Ministry, and Service of the Church of *Corinth*. As the *Lacedaemonians*, fitting their Children to some Trade of life, brought them into a room full-furnished with instruments of all Professions, that so they might choose in what Trade they might be

be serviceable to the Common-wealth; so the Apostle brings them into the Church, *Officinam gratiarum*, the Store-house of all Gods graces, that in the view, and consideration of them, they make their choice. And lest, like Children, they should fancy the gayest, omit the most useful, he gives them direction for the most serviceable graces to the Church of God. And this he doth in the representation of a most lively, and elegant Allegory. As *S. Peter* in a vision being called to preach, had a vessel let down full of the bodies of divers beasts for his choice, and use; (there *corpora bruta*, were *anime humane*, the beasts signified men;) so in these twelve, and thirteen, and fourteen Chapters, there is a representation of the body, and several members of man, head, hands, eyes, feet; here *membra humana*, are *dona divina*, for our choice and practice.

And as in the disposition, and frame of our bodies, so in this dispensation of these gifts of grace, three things are observable in the Apostles discourse, severally handled in these three Chapters, and together collected, and united in my Text:

1. *Varietas membrorum*; A body consists of diverse parts, branches it self into manifold members; so here is, *multiplicitas donorum*, the Spirit diffuses it self into manifold gifts; *Effundam Spiritum meum*, not a drop, or two, but a plentiful shoure of all kind of graces; here are *healings*, *languages*, *miracles*, and all comprised in my Text, *τὰ πνευματικὰ*, all kind of graces. That's the first, *Varietas donorum*, Plenty and variety.
2. A second thing remarkable in the body, is *disparitas membrorum*; all are not alike useful, none equally beautiful; so here is *disparitas donorum*; This holy body, herein is like to that abominable image in *Daniel*; *The arms of silver, the thighs of brass, the legs of clay*, and mean composure; The graces of the Spirit, though none are superfluous, yet some are more useful, and of special improvement; That's included in the other branch of my Text, in this *Comparative*, That's the second choice and disparity.
3. A third thing in the body, is *Excellentia unius membri*; some one hath the prehemineny above the rest, is more vital, and useful, more beautiful, and comely, like that Head of gold, *Dan. 2. 32.* So here is *Excellentia doni*; that's in the first, and chiefest branch of my Text, *ἀγαπᾶν τὸν ἀδελφόν*. Saint *Paul* prefers Charity, before Faith, and Hope, and all other Graces; That's the third thing observable, Prehemineny and Excellency.

The Words are the Apostles direction, for a fitting enablement to the work of the Ministry; and it consists upon three Particulars:

1. Here are *tria objecta*, the Apostle propounds and commends to them three Objects;

1. *Charity*.
2. *Spiritual Gifts*.
3. *Prophecy*.

2. Here are *tres actus*; three acts he perswades them to, tending to these objects:

1. *Διόκεται*, An act of Prosecution.
2. *Ζηλοῦται*, An act of Emulation; The next is implied in,
3. *Μελλοῦται*, And that is *Eligit*, an act of Choice an Election.

3. Here are *tres gradus*; he orders them into three degrees answerable to their true worth, and opposite to the erroneous esteem of these *Corinthians*. Amongst these three, *Charity*, *Spiritual Gifts*, *Prophecy*, they did set the chiefest price, and most doted upon the least profitable, *Miracles* and *Languages*; All would speak Tongues, and work Miracles, but little account was made of *Prophecy*. Like those Sons of *Seeva*, *Acts 19.* they would work Miracles themselves, leave preaching to others, *We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth.* And even those who did prophesie, did it in strife, and much contention, puffing up themselves, not building up others. All their gifts were void of Charity, no thought had of that. The Apostle inverts this order; like the Master of the Feast, *Luke 14.* displaces those that had got the highest room; prefers the lowest, lets Charity in the

Serm. I. first place, *Follow after Charity*: next after it, prefers *Prophecy*, *μᾶλλον δὲ τὰ πρφητεύματα*, leave the third and last room to Tongues and languages. Thus as *Christ* in the raising of *Jairus* his daughter to life, so *S. Paul* at *Corinth*, in the converting of a sinner;

1. He puts out the *Minstrels*, and unlikely means to recover life again; displaces *Languages*, which *S. Paul*, *Vers. 7.* compares to *Minstrels*, a dead sound of piping, and harping: Then,

2. He brings in *Prophecy*, that is a quickning word, like *Christ's* word to the *Damofel*; that, fetches her to life again: Then,

3. He brings in *Charity*, like the *Parents* of the *Damofel*, to feed and nourish her; that, feeds, and maintains, and strengthens her.

Come we to the,

First Object, Charity; that is the principal, and the chiefest Grace; and the Observation hence, is briefly this; that *Charity* and *Compassion* to the Church of *Christ*, above all other graces, is a principal gift required in a Minister. Look upon *Aaron* the High Priest, in his holy attire, and then ask *David* the morality of all that Ceremony; *As the precious Oyntment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aarons beard, that went down to the skirts of his garment, Psal. 133.* 2. without which, it was death to serve in the Temple; so comely, and necessary, in the office of a Minister, is *Charity*, and compassion to the Church of God. *S. Paul* prefers it before faith, and hope, and all other graces. Though not for personal, and private use, yet for service, and benefit to the Church of God, it exceeds them all. 'Tis a fundamental preparative, and disposition for all other graces, and enablements; and that in these three respects:

1. *Ut habeat*; It fits and enables him for the receipt, and obtaining of them. In this case, it is with the working of the Spirit, as with his Being. As naturally he proceeds, *per modum amoris*; so, graciously he inspires and sanctifies, *per modum charitatis*. *Multa remissa*, many sins forgiven, *because she loved much*; and so, *multa concessa*, many graces infused, if we love much. This was represented in the first effusion of the Holy Ghost. The Apostles were in one house, and in one mind, in a charitable union; and then they received those cloyen Tongues. Of which *S. Aug.* speaks, alluding to those two descents of the Holy Ghost: they had first *Spiritus unitum in columba*, before *divisum in linguis*; He descended in the appearance of a Dove, the Embleme of Charity; after that, *In linguis divisus*, in Tongues and Languages: They were together in one mind, and in one house combined in Charity. As *Origen* observes of *Job's* Children; Mark, faith he, their charitable affection! Satan could sooner kill them all together, than by any breach of love, make them fall out, and live asunder. This *Chrysostom* notes in *S. Paul's* Conversion, and Call to the Ministry; God observed his zealous affection to the Synagogue, how strongly he loved his Mother-Church, *Christ* would especially gain him to his service: As a Captain, who sees in his enemies Camp, a valiant, and resolute Souldier for the good of his Country, labours by all means to work him on his side, and furnishes him with his choicest Armour; so God calls *S. Paul*, and enables him with his richest graces. That's the first thing observable; *Ut habeat*, it fits and enables him for all other graces.

2. *Ut Ecclesie habeat*. When they are infused, *Charity* stirs them up, and improves them to the use, and advantage of the Church of *Christ*. Other gifts, without *Charity*, rest in the persons into whom they are infused; *Charity*, disperses, and conveys them to others. See this express'd in *S. Paul's* Similitude; *The whole body is compacted by that which every joynt supplies — and makes an increase of the body unto the edifying of it self in love*. Other graces without *Charity*, as meat received into the body without the natural warmth, lies clogging the stomach; but *Charity*, like the vital heat, concocts, and conveys them to every member; it makes a supply to every part, *Ep. 4. 16.* That's the reason, that of all other graces, God requires our *Charity* to be bestowed on his Church; he seemsto part with his own right in it, and sets it over to his Church. *If God so loved us, What then? The inference, we should think, were more natural; Then we must love*

we must love him again: But God parts with his interest, bestows it on his Children; *Then ought we to love one another*, 1 Joh. 4. 11. He requires us to exhibit it to his Church. Serm. I.

1. *In signum amoris*; then 'tis best tryed. Every man will love God: it is best discovered in our love to his Church.
2. *In fructum amoris*; the fruit of our Charity cannot reach to him. As David, desiring to shew love to Jonathan even after his death, inquires out Mephibosheth, or any of his children, that they might enjoy what Jonathan could not. *Quod homini proficit, Deo servit*, saith Tertullian. Then Charity is most serviceable to God, when it is profitable to his Church.

The Church, that is commended especially to our love and Charity. As S. Bernard observes of Christ's provision for his Mother at his death; he commended her to S. John his loving Disciple, and in terms of love, *Behold thy Mother*, and, *Behold thy Son*; so in the disposition, that's the principle affection to which Christ commits it. Art thou a Minister? conceive Christ's voice from his Cross to thee *Behold thy Mother, behold thy Son*. This was the Preface to S. Peter's charge; *Peter, lovest thou me?* then *feed my flock*. Of both which Speeches to S. Peter, and S. John, Aquinas conceits, that, answerable to their affection, so was their commission. Saint Peter loved *Christum mysticum in membris*, Christ in his members; to him therefore the Church was by name commended. Saint John loved *Christum personalem*, Christ in his person; to him therefore he committed the care of his Mother.

Love is the affection that's principally required. This we see typified in Aarons Breast-plate; the names of the Israelites they were ingraven and set upon the holy Pectoral, not upon his shoulders only for care and burden, but upon his Breast, the seat of love; they must be dear and tender to him. It is a sin in any man to be void of Charity; but it is an hainous impiety in a Priest. It had been cruelty in any Jew, not to regard his Brother's wounded and bleeding body; but for a Levite, and a Priest to pass by, and neglect the body, nay the soul, of their Brother without Charity and compassion, what sin more abominable?

Without this gift, all other graces they are fruitless and unprofitable, *sine hac, nihil sum*, saith the Apostle; not *minor*, or *parvus*, but *nihil sum*. Had I all Languages, even to the tongues of Angels; had I all Miracles, to remove Mountains; had I all Patience, even to the enduring of Martyrdom, (*Quale crimen*, saith Cyprian, *quod nē Martyrio quidem potest expiari?*) *sine hac nihil sum*. And *cum hac, omnia sum*. Charity bears all, believes all, hopes all. Strange! The act of Charity is only to love; *Elicit suum actum, imperat omnem*. As a spring in a Clock sets all the Wheels going; or the *Primum mobile* in Heaven carries all the Spheres with it. Art thou to Prophecy? *Charitas cogit*, saith the Apostle, *The love of Christ constrains*. Hast thou Languages? they are unprofitable in themselves divided from Charity. Charity directs and unites them together, *Ex una lingua, factæ sunt multe, hoc superbia fecit; ex multis facta est una, hoc charitas facit*. Aug. Saint James speaking of malicious tongues, saith, *They are set on fire of Hell, and they set on fire the whole course of nature in strife and confusion*; so these gifts of tongues, being set on fire by Charity, as by fire from Heaven, they set on fire the whole course of nature, in grace and conversion.

Not, as if Charity were absolutely necessary; as if none but a Convert could convert others. Tongues, and Miracles, as we see in Judas, they may do good; but not so kindly, as when love employs them. As S. Augustine observes of Christ's Miracles, they prevailed the more with his Auditours, because they were not only *signa potentie*, but *fructus amoris*. They were *miracula salutaria*, helpful, and beneficial. Had they been *nociva*, as Moses his were in Egypt, they would have bred hatred and terrour, driven men farther from him; or, had they been *innocua*, to remove Mountains, to fly in the Air, they would have wrought wonder, and astonishment; but they were *salutaria*, healing, and feeding, and raising from the dead; these were beneficial, and provoked love, and affection.

As

Serm. I.

As the Prophet, when he laid his staff upon the Child, which was *signum potentie*, it never fetch'd life; but the embracing of his Arms, that was *fructus amoris*, that warm'd and enliven'd him. Miracles, and Languages, they may do good, but not so kindly.

Much more, Prophecy, though divided from Charity, hath its use, and profit for the conversion of others. To this purpose, *S. Augustine*, alluding to that of *S. Paul*, *Some preach Christ of good will*, others on by respects, *Quidam*, saith he, *non caste prædicant Christum; tamen, his auditis, fideles nascuntur*. As in natural generation, so likewise in spiritual, *Quidam ad concubitus ingrediuntur, non voluntate generandi, sed luxuriandi libidine*, in lust, not in love, and desire of posterity; and yet they beget Children, *ex fecunditate seminum, non ex turpitudine vitiorum*. The seed of word, it hath *vim plasticam, & prolificam*, a power of regenerating, though dispensed and applied by one not-converted. Let the seed be good that is sown in the furrows, it skills not what the hand be that scatters it abroad. *Pastores mali*, saith *S. Augustine* against the Donatists, bad Shepherds may feed the Flock in good Pastures. Prophecy without Charity hath a power of converting, but not so kindly. As a Chirurgeon, or Physician, is more affectionately careful of his own body, than of a stranger's life. The one he doth *Ex Arte*, to shew his skill; the other *In Affectu*, in Sympathy of affection. The one preaches, *Ut lucretur famam*, for credit and ostentation; the other, *Ut lucretur fratrem*; Thou hast gained thy Brother, saith our Saviour, accounting every Christian, as *S. Paul* did *Onesimus*, his own bowels; and esteeming *S. James* his reward, the best encouragement; Hast thou converted a sinner? *Know thou hast saved a Soul from death, and hast hid a multitude of sins*. That's a second Inforcement *Ut Ecclesia habeat*. Charity improves all his gifts for the benefit of the Church.

3. *Ut Sibi habeat*. Charity makes them comfortable, and profitable to his own soul. That's the excellency of Charity above these other Graces. Tongues without Prophecies, edifie no man; Prophecies without Charity, edifies others, helps not himself; *Charitas, & alios, & seipsum*; He saves himself, and those that hear him. Tongues without Prophecies, like *Nimrod*, they build a Babel, they confound themselves, and bring confusion to others. Prophecies without Charity, like *Noah's* workmen, they build an Ark, edifie the Church, but themselves perish. Charity, with *Noah*, builds for himself and his whole Family, saves himself, and the Church of *Christ*. Prophecies without Charity, it is like light in the Stars, *Lucem in se, Calorem in aliis*, it's light only in it self, begets heat in others: Prophecies with Charity, is like light in the fire, *Lucet, & Ardet*, lightens, and enflames both himself, and others. Prophecies without Charity, nourishes others, feeds not himself: *Non gustat*; as that *Samaritan* Governour, provides for the people, but himself starves; or, *Tantum gustat*, hath some smack or relish of saving truth, but feeds not upon it; Like Nurses, that taste only of that, their Children live upon. Charity eats, and digests, and grows by it. Prophecies without Charity doth *Sua Deo, Se Diabolo*, as *Saint Gregory* speaks, bestows his fruits and pains upon God, himself upon the Devil. *Plus dat qui & fructum, & arborem dat, quam qui solum fructum*, saith *Aquinas* out of *Anselm*. Charity consecrates both tree and fruit, himself and his labours, to God and his Church. That's a third Inforcement, *Ut sibi habeat*. Charity is a fundamental spiritual Grace; then, Prophecies; then other gifts, are like colours well laid. Charity is a ground-colour, Prophecies upon it, is a lasting-tincture; then Tongues, and Languages, like varnish upon these, are for show and ornament.

That's the first Object propounded and commended, *Charity*. Pass we on to the

Second, *as requiring, Spiritual gifts*. And from hence observe, that the right aim, and chiefest desire of a faithful, and worthy Minister, 'tis for spiritual blessings; And this we may consider,

1. In the kind.

2. In the Parts of them.

L The

I. The Kind and Condition of them will appear in a double Opposition : Serm. I.

1. Is *Spiritualia*, not *Naturalia*. He contents not himself with natural endowments, strength of wit, largeness of memory, quickness of apprehension ; nay, denies them, being severed from Grace, as fruitless, and unprofitable. *Stultus fito, ut fias sapiens*, is the Apostle's word. Thou, in thy Calling to be a Minister, must be in St. Paul's Case, struck blind, before enlightened ; *Lucem occurrentem habuit, before illuminantem* ; (As the light of the Sun will put out a Candle) ; and *circumfusam* before *infusam*, saith Saint Bernard, to make him know how he came by it, before he received it. Natural knowledge, in St. James his account, 'tis *earthly, sensual, devillish* ; Earthly in the original, sensual in the use, devillish in the end and issue of it. The mysteries of our Calling are above the reach of created nature. *Anima creationem, intelligunt & Demones* ; the Devil is a better Naturalist, than the greatest Philosopher ; *Anima conversionem, ignorant & Angeli* ; the Angels adore these mysteries of Conversion. The strongest natural parts, they are no better than Crab-stocks in this Garden of the Church ; if they have not that *πνευμαλισμὸς*, as St. James terms it, the word engrafted upon them, they continue fruitless. As St. Augustine, discoursing of Moses and Paul, the great Spirit and courage they shewed before their calling ; Moses his valour in slaying the Egyptian, Pauls zeal for the Jewish Synagogue ; he compares them to rich grounds untilled, overgrown with weeds ; *Non virtutum fructibus inutiles erant, quamvis vitiosa magna fertilitatis ferebant indicia* ; they might prove good, if well husbanded ; but as they are, *quò meliores, eo deteriores* ; the greater are our parts, the greater are our sins. And yet how ready are we to judge and account all to be natural ? Which makes St. Paul challenge these Corinthians ; *What hast thou that thou hast not received ?* 'Tis purposely meant of Ministerial endowments. And St. James foresees how soon we mistake ; and therefore saith he, *Err not, my dear brethren, they are all from above* ; no parts of nature, but gifts of grace. That's the first Opposition ; *Spiritualia*, not *Naturalia*.

2. *Spiritualia*, not *Temporalia* ; and that in a double Consideration.

1. Not *Temporale*, *Spirituali contrarium*.

2. Not *Temporale*, *Spirituali annexum*.

1. Not *Spirituali contrarium* ; Not that it is incompatible, and cross to our spiritual Calling : No, but the aim of a Christian (especially of a Minister) 'tis spiritual, and Heavenly. Christ taught us this Lesson in his first Call ; He chose the poorest, those who were loofest from the World, to be his Embassadors. Temporal Kings, *Per divites ad pauperes*, they publish their Laws by rich men, to the poor ; Christ, *Per pauperes ad divites*, he sends the poor to preach to the rich. Temporal blessings, be they at the best, are unworthy to be nam'd, as the aim of a Minister ; *Æstimant Sortem pretio vilissimo, bono temporali* ; we abase our Calling to prize it no higher. *Cælum, Thronus Dei ; terrenum, bona Scabelli*. Prayest thou for spiritual graces ? he reacheth thee them from his Throne in Heaven. Art thou craving temporals ? he spurns to thee those from his Footstool on Earth. Spiritual blessings, they come near to the nature of God ; Earthly are heterogeneous, and of a lower condition. By graces, *we are made partakers of the divine nature*, saith the Apostle Saint Peter. To neglect these for temporal good things, 'tis to loath Mannah, and long for Onyons, and Garlick of Egypt. *Allium & Cæpe, præ Cælo spirant*, saith Tertullian, That's the first Consideration ; not *Temporale contrarium*.

2. Not *Spirituali annexum* ; Even those temporals that are due, every way due (for such there be, think Church-Robbers what they list) and by God himself annext to our Calling, they are not the chief aim and choice of the Minister. *Non vestra, sed vos*, is the Apostle's profession ; *We seek not yours, but you* ; no, not *Nostra*, though originally due ; with Solomon, craving Wisdom in the first place, riches and honours God will cast upon him ; with Elisha, desiring of God the doubling of Eliahs spirit upon him, the Mante for warmth and Ornament he takes up afterwards. As Christ, not only preferring his spiritual food,

Verbum

Serm. 1. *Verbum Dei*, before Satans bread that's *Spirituali oppositum*; but *Voluntatem Patris*, the doing of his Fathers will, before his Disciples bread, which they bring to him, that's *Spirituali annexum*.

And indeed, 'tis fit they should be void of these Earthly inferiour distractions, that are to mind Heavenly. These Fowls of Heaven should be provided for, without their sowing and reaping; these Lillies of Paradise should not toil, nor spin, and yet grow and flourish. As St. *Augustine* alluding to Gods Curse upon Cain for killing of his Brother, *Let the earth be barren unto thee, when thou tillest it; Quid congruentius*, saith he, *quam ut illum cujus scelere frater occisus est, in terra laborantem sterilitas sequeretur; illis, quorum ministerio salvantur, de crastino minime cogitantibus fructuosa terra serviret* & Cain, who kill'd his Brother, even when he labours, is curst with barrenness; Ministers, who save their brethren, even though they labour not, must be provided for with fruitfulness; That's the second, Not *Spirituali annexum*.

That's the Kind; I come

II. To the Parts of them;

I. It is *Spirituale donum*; Seek, and labour for spiritual enablements, The inclinations of nature must be strengthened, and elevated with gifts of grace. The weightiest employments require the greatest enablements. Those three great Callings, Kings, Priests, Prophets, they were all anointed; to signify that large measure of grace, that those Callings required. Nay, the High-Priest had all the holy Oyl poured out upon him; to signify his Calling required plenty of grace; the inferior Servitors were but only sprinkled in a sparing manner. Indeed, to be gifted, and fitted by the holy Spirit, 'tis the only comfortable assurance to thy Conscience of thine inward Calling; Gods Seal set *ἐν πνεύματι*, without which, the warrant of the Church, 'tis but *ἐν ὕδατι*, in Ink Paper, as St. *Paul* distinguishes.

And yet, how many run before they be sent? suing, like *Abimeaz* to the *Joabs* of Israel; But what if I run? though they have no tidings. Who, if they were questioned, whether they have received the Holy Ghost in some competency of gifts must return the answer of those uncatechiz'd Novices, *Act 19. We know not whether there be any Holy Ghost*, yea, or no. No, God never employs, but he always enables; as *Saul* did with *David*, when he sent him to fight, he put on his own Armour; he will strengthen thee with his own Spirit, to discharge His business.

That's the first; *Spirituale donum*.

2. Is *Spirituale ut officium*; Seek and labour for spiritual employments. And indeed, *Donum obligat ad officium*; the conferring of a gift, it is the exacting of a service: 'Tis like Press-money; if once thou receivest it, thou art bound to do service. Thou art a servant and thou must, and thou hast a Talent and thou maist be profitable to thy Masters advantage. To have the first, *Spirituale donum*, without this second, it is to no advantage. *Donum in habitu*, 'tis *Talentum in sudario*; *Donum in exercitio*, 'tis *Talentum in mensario*, it gains, and encreases. *Donum in habitu*, 'tis a Candle in a Bushel; exercise and employ it, 'tis set on a Candlestick. Without exercise and practice, saith St. *Bernard*, thou art *Lux modii*; with it, thou art *Lux mundi*. Not only the mispending, but the neglecting of this gift condemns thee. St. *Paul* bids *Timothy* *ἀναλωπυρεῖν*, fire goes out for want of blowing, as well as with quenching. Metal, not only wears out by use, but is eaten with rust. And what saith, St. *James*? *The rust of your gold shall witness against you*, not only the mispending. The rust of our gifts, as well as the mis-using shall rise up, and condemn us. To be able to preach, and not to perform it, St. *Augustine* counts it like the sin of *Onan*, *Maledictus qui non suscitatur semen in Israel; predicando Christum, generare Christianum*. Art thou invited to preach, and yet refuseth? Art thou shod with this preparation of the Gospel, and yet refuseth when the Church calls for thine help? thou shalt be *discalceatus in Israel*. If thou wilt not raise up seed to thy elder Brother *Christ*, the Church may pull off thy Shoes, and spit in thy face; *Nē sis in eorum numero, quorum pedes sunt speciosi*. 'Tis St. *Augustine's* Allegory. That's the second; *Spirituale, ut officium*.

3. *Spiritualem*

3. *Spiritualem potestatem*. Labour for, and desire onely spiritual Power and Authority. As in the first, *Donum obligat ad officium*; so here, *Officium disponit ad potestatem*. Our Authority and Power is onely spiritual. The Weapons of our Warfare are *divinitus potentia*. Thus S. Chrysostome, magnifying and preferring his spiritual Power; To a King, are Bodies committed; to a Priest, Souls; they fight with sensible Armour; we, with spiritual: They fight against Barbarians, we fight against Devils; as he speaks elsewhere: His Doctrine is to him, as Fire and Sword. The Censures are onely spiritual, that the Church inflicts. This Thunder of the Church, like that from Heaven, melts the Metal, meddles not with the Sheath; works upon the Soul.

And yet what a stir keeps that Priest of Rome for his temporal Power to be joyned with spiritual? Joyning with his Pastoral Staff, an Imperial Sword, (as we see some Rapiers sheathed up in Staves;) in Censuring of the Church; wishing, as Balaam did in beating of his Ass, I would my Staff were a Sword in my hand, for then would I kill thee.

And yet we exclude not all temporal Power as utterly unlawful. 'Tis not a Consequent from our spiritual, but yet it is compatible with it. Christ doth not command it, but the Prince may confer it. Only of our selves, 'tis meerly spiritual. That's the third part; *Spiritualem potestatem*; a Spiritual Authority.

I come briefly to the Third Object propounded to them, and that is Prophecy. And by it, I conceive, with Expositors, not any extraordinary miraculous Revelation, but an ordinary set Course of Preaching, and Interpreting, and Opening the Mystery of the Gospel; in S. Paul's Description, *A speaking to men to edifying, to exhortation, and comfort*. And then take notice of the Nature and Honour of this holy Function; Preaching, 'tis Prophesying.

1. It is *loco Prophetiae*; 'tis in the room and stead of Revelation and Prophecy. As the *Israelites* were first fed with Manna, afterwards, that ceasing, they fed on the Fruit of the Land. Prophecy now ceasing, we must wait for no more Visions, but rest our selves on the set Word of God. See this observable in the Closure of both the Testaments. *Malachi*, the last of the Old Prophets, shuts up the Old Testament with this Seal; *Remember ye the Law of Moses my servant, which I commanded to him in Horeb, for all Israel, with the Statutes and Judgments, till Elias comes*; there were no more Prophets till John, at Christ's first Coming. S. John, the last of the Apostles, he seals up the New Testament with the same Closure; no more Additions to the New Testament, till Christ's second Coming. We have *Moses* and the Prophets, Christ and the Apostles, in stead of Revelation: It is *loco Prophetiae*.

2. It is *aequale Prophetiae*; 'tis as good as Prophecy, of the same Nature, springing from the same Fountain and Original: As the Fire on the Altar, though maintained and fed with ordinary Fuel, yet is counted Heavenly, because the first Original of it was from Heaven. The Scriptures contain fully the Marrow and Pith of all former Prophecies in the Old Testament. As at the first Creation, the Lord made an extraordinary Light, but after conveyed it into the Body of the Sun and Moon, and all Light now arises from them; so in the beginnings of the Church, God set up an extraordinary Light of Prophecy; now he conveys it all into the Body of the Scripture, comprehending all saving Truths that they reveal. It is *aequale Prophetiae*.

3. It is *melius Prophetiae*; it is better than Prophecy. The ordinary Word, especially of the Gospel, is more excellent and useful, than extraordinary Revelations under the Law;

1. *Ratione certitudinis*. S. Peter calls the Scripture *Verbum*, a surer Word, than a Voice from Heaven. As the Motion of a Star is more certain and regular, than an extraordinary Comet.

2. *Ratione claritatis*. The Gospel is more clear and evident, than either Prophecy or Priesthood in the Old Testament. That was but *Lucerna*, saith S. Peter, this is *Lucifer*; that was but like a Candle, this like the Day-star springing in our Hearts. The

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The Clearness of the Old Testament, it was but *splendor vultus*; the Face of *Moses* did only shine in his Revelations: The Clearness of the New Testament is *splendor pedum*, their very Feet are glorious that preach the Gospel. The Shining of the Old Testament was *splendor in velamine*, as S. Paul observes; the very Clearness of that was hidden and vail'd over with much obscurity: *Christ* shining in the New Testament, 'tis far more evident, 'tis *velamen in splendore*; his very Garments are clear, and glorious as the Sun. The clear preaching of *Christ*, made *John the Baptist* greater than the Prophets; the meanest of our Calling, greater than *John the Baptist*. This evident preaching and pointing out *Christ*, makes some of the Fathers compare Prophets to Cocks, the nearer the Sun-rising, the lower they crow: The nearest to *Christ*, makes the clearest Preaching.

3. *Ratione perpetuitatis*: Preaching is better than prophesying, in the lasting continuance and perpetuity. Prophecy, it is but temporary, as a Candle in S. Peter's account. *Lucerna, & accendi debet, & extingui potest*, saith S. Aug. A Candle, it is soon put out. The Ministry of the Gospel is as the Sun in the Firmament, not to be darkned till the last day. 'Tis an everlasting Gospel, Rev. 14. 6. Preaching and Baptizing have a Patent of Eternity; Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Matth. 28. 20 Thus S. Gregory compares Miraculous Gifts in the Infancy of the Church, to a Child's Standing-stool; when the Child is grown, and strong, that's taken away. God hath withdrawn these extraordinary Supportments in this grown Age of his Church. That's the third; it is, *melius Prophetia*.

4. Let me add one Parallel more 'twixt Preachers and Prophets, and that by way of Exhortation. S. Augustine discoursing of the State of the Patriarchs, that their whole Carriage and Life was full of Mysteries, concludes, *Primorum patrum dico, non tantum linguam, verum etiam & vitam fuisse prophetica, illudque regnum Hebraeorum magnum quendam fuisse Prophetam*; their Commonwealth was a Prophet, it was so full of Mysteries. As they in Mystery, so now in Morality, should not the Lives of our Preachers, should not the State of our Churches, even in this sense, prophesie? equal and parallel them in Sanctity and Piety? prophesying in our Lives, preaching in our Examples? every Action to be a Doctrine? the whole Carriage of our Lives a continued Instruction to those that behold us, not only by speaking, but even ἀρχαῖον τῆς σιωπῆς, as Nazianzen professes of his own endeavour. When we are silent, by example edifying, *non tantum lingua, sed etiam & vita fuit prophetica*.

So much for the Objects. Now follow,

Secondly, The three Acts;

1. ΔΙΩΚΕΤΕ, An Act of Prosecution.

2. ΖΗΛΟΥΕΤΕ, An Act of Emulation.

3. In ΜΕΛΛΟΥ, An Act of Election.

1. ΔΙΩΚΩ, That infers these Particulars;

1. *Ex parte Objecti*;

1. *Distantiam Objecti*, Distance and Remoteness. This heavenly Grace, 'tis not inbred, or hard at hand, presently attained to; 'tis remote, it requires prosecution.

2. *Difficultatem Objecti*; 'tis beset with Difficulties, it costs much pains and striving. Διόκω implies hardship and extremity; *If by any means I may attain*, saith S. Paul.

3. *Excellentiam Objecti*; Rareness and Excellency. It must sure be some excellent thing, that deserves so much pains in prosecuting and obtaining; a precious Pearl, that is worth so much inquiring. Charity, 'tis a remote, 'tis a difficult, 'tis an excellent Endowment.

Consider it,

2. *Ex parte actus*; It implies two things,

1. *Intensionem actus*; Intension and Vehemency: 'Tis an Act vehement, and violent. S. Chrysostome observes upon these Words of S. Paul, Διόκω

τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, and διώκω τὴν δικαιοσύνην, *persequens Ecclesiam, justitiam*, that S. Paul was as violent and extreme for, as against *Christ*; in prosecuting, as in persecuting. 'Tis a vehement intension.

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2. *Extensionem actus*; Extension and continuance: it holds out, gives not over. S. Paul, in *Philip. 3.* expresses διώκω by ἐπεκτείνω, and that signifies, the last girds and stretchings out of the Body at the end of a Race, for fear of falling short. That's the Extension.

2. Ζηλοῦτε, that's the second Act; an earnest Desire, upon a comparative emulation of other mens Gifts. *Æmulamini*, that implies,

1. *Agnitionem profectus alieni*, an ingenuous Acknowledgment of another man's Proficiency.

2. *Confessionem defectus proprii*, an humble Confession of his own Deficiency.

3. *Desiderium imitationis*, a strong Endeavour to imitate and equal them.

3. In ἡμῶν, there's the third Act, *Eligite*; an Act of Choice and Election: And that implies two things;

1. *Non posse omnia*; we are put to our choice; ingross all Gifts we cannot. God will have a necessitude and dependency of one anothers Graces. S. Paul forbids those uncharitable Terms of one Member to another, *I have no need of thee, and I have no need of thee*, arising from conceit of Self-sufficiency. That's the first, *Non posse omnia*.

2. *Velle meliora*; make choice of the best, the most glorious to God, the most profitable to his Church, the most comfortable to thy self; and that's Prophecy.

Let us beseech him, who is the Father of Lights, from whom proceeds every good and perfect Gift, That he would pour out his Spirit upon all Flesh, that our old men may prophesie, and our young men see Visions: And He make us faithful Dispensers of his manifold Gifts, to the building up of his Church in Charity and Unity, through Him in whom he vouchsafes them to us, Jesus Christ, our Saviour:

To whom, &c.

Serm. I.

A

S E R M O N

On I. Epist. of St. John v. 3.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments; and his Commandments are not grievous.

WE love him, because he loved us first, saith the Apostle, 1 John 4. 19. Our Love to God, being but a Reflexion of those Beams of Love which he first casts upon us. An evident Proof of this, we may see in this Apostle; he was our Saviour's beloved Disciple, the choice Favourite among all the Apostles; one that enjoy'd the greatest Portion of our Saviour's Affection; and therefore, as having received the greatest Love, he returns the most again to *Christ*; his Heart was enflamed with the Love of *Christ*: In all his Epistles he breathes nothing but Love; he stirs up himself, and all others, to the Love of *Christ*. Now,

1. Because all men are ready to profess their Love to *Christ*; no man thinks himself to be so ungracious, as to be void of the Love of God, though the Scripture tells us expressly, even of Generations of men that *hate God*, *Exod. 20. 5*. And our Saviour tells the Jews plainly, *I know that you have not the love of God in you*, S. John 5. 42. Every wicked man is God's professed Enemy.

2. Because Christian Love, 'tis the chiefest trial, the clearest evidence and demonstration of our Faith; the kindest Fruit that springs from Faith, is Love. A true saving Faith, is Faith working by Love, *Gal. 5. 6*. It works by all other Graces; 'tis Faith working by Justice, by Patience, by Temperance, but especially by Love.

3. Our Love to *Christ* being that which he most strictly enquires into, he speaks to us, as he did to S. Peter, John 21. *Simon Peter, lovest thou me?* And again and again, *Lovest thou me?* Never gives over, till our Hearts answer, *Lord, thou knowest that I love thee*. Our Love to God being a matter of so great importance, therefore that we be not mistaken in so necessary a Duty, S. John gives us here a certain Description of the Love of God, by which we may assuredly know, that we love our God indeed and in truth; *This is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments; and his Commandments are not grievous*.

—So then, the Words I have read unto you, are a sweet Description of a good Christian; you may know and discern him by a threefold Character:

1. How stands he affected to God and *Christ*? What Heart bears he to him? He is such an one as hath a loving Heart to God. *The love of God is shed abroad into his heart*, Rom. 5. *The love of God rules in his heart*. *I am sick of love*, saith the Spouse in the *Canticles*, protesting the strength of her Love to our Saviour.

2. What is the Action that flows from this Affection? What is the Fruit of our Love to God? How doth it testify and manifest it self? It shews it self in a Religious Obedience to what God enjoyns us, it will *keep his Commandments*.

3. What is the Disposition and Inclination which one that loves God finds in himself to the Obedience and Observation of God's Commandments? My Text tells us, He doth it willingly, chearfully, with delight and alacrity; he murmurs not, nor repines; he groans not under the yoke of Obedience; he snuffs not at God, as they in *Malachi*, and cry out, *Oh, what a weariness it is to serve the Lord!*

Lord! No, Saint John tells us, *God's Commandments are not grievous to him.* Sermon I.
Come we to the

First Particular; What is the Affection that a good Christian bears to Christ? 'Tis Love; yes, that's the Christian Virtue, that's the Evangelical Grace. 'Tis the main difference 'twixt the Law and the Gospel, *Timor, & Amor.* The Law, 'tis the *ministration* of Fear; the Gospel, that's the Breeder and Begetter of Love. The Law begets Fear, it *genders unto bondage*; but the Gospel breeds Love, casts out slavish Fear; The Gospel begets in us *the Spirit of Love and Liberty.* The Scripture makes it the Sum of all, the Substance of Religion. *Neither circumcision avails any thing*, as the Jews would have it, *nor uncircumcision*, as the converted Gentiles; *but Faith that works by Love*, Gal. 5. 6.

Indeed, 'tis the End both of Law and Gospel. St. Augustine sets out the several Links of this Chain of Salvation, and how they depend one upon another. First, *Lex adducit ad fidem*; the Law, that sends us to Faith; then, *Fides fundit orationem*, Faith, that pours out Prayer; then, *Oratio impetrat Spiritum*, Prayer obtains the Spirit; then, *Spiritus diffundit charitatem*, the Spirit, that inspires us with Love; & *Charitas implet Legem*, and Love, 'tis the fulfilling of the Law. Here is the whole Frame and Fabrick of a Christian. Faith, that lays the Foundation; but Love, that sets up the Wall, and lays on the Roof, brings all to perfection.

Not that a Christian ought to be free from all kind of Fear. There is a threefold Fear to which we are liable, answerable to our threefold State and Condition;

1. The first, I call, a State of Subjection; in this we were created, and in this we stood before our Fall.
2. The second is the State of Rebellion upon our Fall.
3. The third is a State of Adoption upon our Recovery and Reconciliation.

And these three States have a suitable Fear agreeing to them:

1. As we were in our primitive, original State of Subjection; so we owe to God a Fear of Loyalty, as good Subjects to their Prince and Sovereign.
2. Our State of Rebellion, that brought upon us the Fear of Slavery.

But then,

3. Our State of Adoption, that begets in us a Filial and Son-like Fear, the Fear and Reverence of a loving Child to his dear Father.

The first Fear, the Fear of Loyalty, looks upon God as a Law-giver, and so stands in awe of him.

The second, the Fear of Slavery, looks upon him as an Enemy and Avenger, and so is dismayed with the Terroure of him: But

The third, *Filial Fear*, considers him as a gracious Father, and so is affected with a Child-like Duty and Reverence to him.

The Fear of Subjection must still continue with us.

The Fear of Slavery, while we are in the State of Corruption, will still haunt us: But,

Filial Fear, that must grow and increase in us. *Filial Fear*, 'tis the consequent of Love. *They shall fear the Lord, and his Goodness*, Hof. 3. 5. *Loyal Fear*, 'tis consistent with Love, (*Hunc timorem habet charitas; imò non habet, nisi charitas.* Aug. de Filiali timore); but *Servile* and *Slavish Fear*, 'tis contrary to Love.

Fear then, 'tis not wholly excluded from the State of a Christian; but yet the Grace that the Gospel aims at, 'tis the Grace of Love. *The end of the Commandment* (especially as the Gospel propounds it) *is Love*, 1 Tim. 1. 5. 'Tis the aim of all God's gracious Dealings with us. *He hath chosen us, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love*, Ephes. 1. 4. 'Tis the Sum of his Covenant which he hath made with us, *He keeps Covenant and Mercy with them that love him*, Deut. 7. 9.

See the Excellency of this Love of God, in three Particulars:

1. This Love of God gives a chief Title and Denomination to Christians; 'tis their Badge and Cognizance. Thus Solomon describes an holy man, Cant. 1.

The

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The upright love thee. So David describes an holy man; *Let them that love thy Name, be joyful in thee,* Psal. 5. 11. David sues to God for Favour and Mercy under this denomination, *Psal. 119. 122. Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do to those that love thy Name.* 'Tis this Grace that God highly regards in us; *If any man love God, the same is known of God,* 1 Cor. 8. 3. He sets much by such, and owns them, and highly accounts of them.

2. This Love, 'tis the Title and Assurance of all his Promises. All his Promises are appropriated to them that love him. *I will shew mercy unto thousands of them that love me.* 'Tis in the Second Commandment.

1. Heavenly Promises and Blessings are passed to us upon this Condition. *He shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him,* James 1. 12. *Eye hath not seen, neither hath ear heard, what God hath provided for them that love him,* 1 Cor. 2. 9.

2. Temporal Blessings are assured us with this Proviso, *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him,* Psal. 91. 14. See how large a Patent God hath made to such Christians, *Rom. 8. We know that all things shall work together for the good of such as love God.* Whatsoever befalls them, shall turn to their good; as, on the contrary, all shall work to the worst to them that love him not; they are doomed by St. Paul with an heavy Curse, *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran-atha, accursed for ever,* 1 Cor. 16. 22.

3. Love, 'tis the ingratiating Quality of all our Services; 'tis that which commends us and our Services to God's acceptation; they are then accepted of God, when they spring from Love. 'Tis Love that is the *fulfilling of the Law,* Rom. 13. 10. Thus Christ shews what kind of Obedience he expects at our Hands, *John 14. If ye love me, keep my Commandments.* 'Tis the labour of love that he expects and requites. Thus St. Paul speaks of his Labour in Preaching; *Necessity is laid upon me, and wo be to me, if I preach not the Gospel; for if I do this willingly, (out of love) I have a reward,* 1 Cor. 9. 16, 17. Especially God in the Gospel invites us to his Service by Motives of Love, draws us to it with the Cords of Love. 'Tis not the Language of the Gospel, If ye will avoid Wrath and Vengeance, escape Damnation, then perform Obedience to me; but, *If ye love me.*

1. All other Motives are base and servile, without this willing and loving Affection. To serve out of fear only, lest we smart for it, 'tis the Drudgery of a Slave; to serve out of love, 'tis the Duty of a Son. *Si quid boni feceris & invitatus, fit de te magis, quam à te;* 'tis done upon thee, rather than by thee; thou rather sufferest the doing, than doest it thy self. No, this is the mark of a Child of God; *His delight is in the Law of God,* Psal. 1. He takes a pleasure and felicity in it. *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; he delighteth greatly in his Commandments,* Psal. 112.

2. The Service of Love is onely accepted, because it alone is an ingenuous Service, and of a right intention. He that serves God onely to escape Punishment, or to gain some Reward to himself, such a Service ariseth onely out of Self-love; he dares not offend, lest he should be miserable. But he that serves God out of love to him, such an one aims at God, not at himself. Were there no Hell to punish him, no Heaven to reward him, the Love of God would work him to all due Obedience. Indeed, as *Parisenfis* notes, He that abstains from Sin for fear of Punishment only, there is no more Retribution due to him, than to Thieves and Pilferers, that abstain from Theft for fear they should be apprehended and punished. And so he that serves God onely for a Reward, serves not God, but himself. *Illi servit unusquisque, propter quem servit;* he doth it for his own sake, not for God's sake: But love seeks not its own, but the Honour of God to whom it is devoted.

3. This Service out of Love is most acceptable to God, because this kind of Service is most honourable to God. He that serves him for Love, doth truly perform an honourable Service to him. *Non colitur Deus, nisi amando,* Aug. He onely honours him, that doth truly love him. Whereas he that serves him for fear

fear only, casts a secret aspersion upon God; like the bad servant in the Gospel, *Serm. I.*
Luke 19. that told his Lord, *I know thou art a hard man.* No, God is a gracious
 Sovereign, not a cruel Tyrant, and so desires to be served as good Subjects serve
 their King, out of love; not as Bond-slaves serve an usurping Tyrant, out of
 dread and terrour.

4. The service of love is the only service that God sets much by; because
 that service which arises from love, is the only constant, and lasting service.
Love is long-breath'd, and will hold out and persevere; whereas fear is a flincher,
 and will soon tire, and start aside. Thus the dissembling *Israelites started aside like*
a broken bow. The Psalmist gives the reason, their Hearts were not true to him;
When he slew them, then they sought to him, and returned; but they did but flatter
him with their Mouth, for their Hearts were not right with him, Pſal. 78. Extorted
 obedience is never lasting, *Metus, haud diuturni magister officii.* But Love is full of
 Patience, and perseverance, thinks no duty we do to God, tedious, or irksome;
 counts a perpetual service but short; we may invert *David's* words, esteems a thou-
 sand days in Gods service, but as one day: as *Jacob* endured fourteen years hard
 service for *Rachel*; he bore the melting heat of the day, the pinching cold of the
 night; and yet, they seemed but a few days, *Because he loved her, Gen. 29. 20.*

That's the first thing considerable; The affection of Love.

We come,

Secondly, To that that is the fruit of this loving Affection, the action that flows
 from it, that's Obedience; *Herein is love, that we keep his Commandments*; that's
 the kindly proof of our Love. *Probatio dilectionis, est exhibitio operis,* saith Gregory;
 Doing and obeying, is a strong demonstration of our inward and cordial loving
 him. And this sets out the just requisites and qualifications of our love to God.
 It puts four qualifications upon our Love:

1. It shews, our love to God must be *Amor operativus*; it must be an active,
 and operative, and working love. Indeed, love it is seated in the Will, the fountain
 of action; it rests not in our understanding, the knowing faculty. 'Tis not a meer
 notion or speculation, swimming in the Brain, but a devout affection rooted in
 the Heart. Bare knowledge of God makes us not the better. *Knowledge,* saith St.
Paul, puffs up; but 'tis love that builds up. Bare notion, 'tis not *soliditas*, but *tumor*,
 saith St. Aug. like windy meats, they swell; but they do not fill with any good
 nourishment. Therefore the Apostle places all in love. *If any man think that he*
knows any thing, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know; but if any man loves God,
the same is known of him, 1 Cor. 8. 2, 3. That's worth something.

And as it is doing, not knowing, only; so it must be, *Amor operans*, not *lo-
 quens tantum*; not a love that will vanish into a verbal Profession. Such there are
 of whom St. John speaks; *He that saith he loves God*; 'tis love, and lip-labour,
 both of one value: *Ἀφ' οὗτος ἔργον καὶ ῥῆμα ἀπαρτίζετο λόγῳ.* Naz. Thou sayst, thou lovest
 God, shew me thy love, by thy works of love, otherwise God rejects it, *Isai.*
29. 13. *This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me,*
but have removed their heart far from me. Ye know *Delilah's* expostulation with
Samson, how canst thou say, that thou lovest me, and wilt not do this for me, that
 I require. No, Gods Law, 'tis *Objectum practicum*, 'tis the matter, not of our
 knowing, or speaking only, but of our doing, and practising. Religion, 'tis a
 practical art, serves not to make us the wiser only, but the better also. 'Tis an ho-
 ly art of living well, and not of knowing, and speaking only. *I have lifted up my*
hands to thy Commandments, which I have loved, Pſal. 119. 48. (*lifted up his hands,*
not his Eyes only) saith *David*; and again, *Vers. 105.* *Thy Word is a Lamp unto*
my Feet, not to mine Eyes only to gaze and look on it.

2. *Herein is love, that we keep his Commandments*; It puts another qualification
 on our Love; 'tis *amor reverentialis*; not a love of equality; but a love of subjec-
 tion, and inferiority; such a Love as the Inferiour bears to his Superiour, that hath
 a power to command him; such a Love as the *Israelites* Servant professes to his
 Master, *I love my Master,* and will not leave his service. When we hear of loving
 God, we dream of equality, and familiarity. Oh! God is our Friend, *Christ* is our
 Brother,

Serm. I. Brother, we have fellowship with them both; and so we think we may carry our selves fellow-like towards them. No, the Text tells us, He is still our Commander, and our love we bear to him, must be a love joined with reverence; the love of a Son to his Father, the love of a Servant to his Master, the love of a Subject to his Severaigh; lowly and submissive, such as is the love of an inferior to him that is far above him, and superiour to him.

3. *Herein is love, that we keep his Commandments*; This shews that our love to God must be *Amor regulatus*; a love regulated and restrained to what God commands us. The only matter of religious love and service to God, is, what he hath required, and commanded us to do. *Id utiq; Deo dignum, quod ipse Deus sibi fatetur acceptum*; that is only accepted, which God hath prescribed. *Te are my Friends*, saith Christ, *if ye do what I command you*, *Joh. 15. 14*. In this case, our own inventions, are but presumptions, and superstitions. Hence it is that Love is call'd, *The Royal Law*, because God hath appointed in what things we must shew our love to him. I told you, the love we owe to God, 'tis not a love of equals, but of inferiours, and so must be submissive, and guided by his Will, not by our own. Indeed, for the forwardness, and chearfulness of our love, so it must be voluntary; Nothing is so free as Love. *Non tantum servire Deo meo debet, sed & adulari, Tertul.* But yet for the expressions and performances of it, he hath strictly bounded it within the compas of his *Commandments*. *Saul* thought he had shewed great love in reserving the fat Cattel for Sacrifice; but what said *Samuel*, *Hath the Lord such pleasure in Sacrifices, as when the voice of the Lord is obeyed? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requires at thine hands*. Offer to him not thine Inventions, but his own Prescriptions.

4. *Herein is love, that we keep his Commandments*; This shews, our love to God must be *Amor extensus, & universalis*; our love to God must be intire, and universal, of as large extent, as all Gods Commandments. As before ye heard of a Restriction, so here we meet with an Extension. Love must be the fulfilling of the Law, *Rom. 13*. We must not be partial in the Law of God, as *Malachi* speaks. *Quod propter Deum fit, æqualiter fit*. The love of God looks at every Commandment, and makes Conscience of it. Thus *David* professes the intireness of his obedience; *I esteem all thy Precepts concerning all things to be right*. The least Commandment carries a divine Authority with it. A good Christian sues not to God, as *Naaman* to *Elisha* for a dispensation, *In this the Lord bear with thy Servant*; this sin I must live in, this Commandment I must make bold with. What saith *St. James*? *He that offends in one, is guilty of all*. Not that the same degree, and measure of love, and obedience is required in all; there is a difference, and disproportion. There are some Commandments more essential to piety, and substantial, some but accessory, and circumstantial; some are the main parts and duties of Religion, others but Appurtenances. Now where God lays most weight, there we must expect most care. The love of God, 'tis called, *The great Commandment*, *Matth. 22*. It must be preferred before the love of any Creature: But yet the love of God in a due proportion extends it self to every duty; it will make us shun every sin;

1. The smallest sins. This love will keep us not only from outrageous impieties, but from smaller transgressions. As true love to our Friend will with-hold us not only from doing him a mischief, but from doing him the least displeasure.

2. It will make us avoid even secret sins; not only such sins as may dishonour God by a publick scandal, but love will not offend the Eyes of his Holiness when he sees in secret.

3. Love to God will make us avoid our dearest sins, most delightful, most profitable; it will not only singe off Hairs, but cut off our Hand.

That's the second Particular: Proceed we now,

Thirdly, To the last Particular in the Text; What is the disposition, and inclination, that he which loves God, finds in himself to God's Commandments? He snuffs not at them, as heavy, and burthensome impositions; accounts

not

not the Law of God, as an heavy yoke, *His Commandments are not grievous.* *Serm. I.*
Indeed in some respects, 'tis most true, God's Commandments are exceeding heavy. There is in them not only *magnum pondus*, they are weighty and ponderous; but they are also, *magnum onus*, heavy and burthensom. See the truth of this in three Particulars;

1. Take the Law of God at its full height, and pitch of perfection, so it hath a great difficulty in it; yea, in a manner, an impossibility in it to all Men since *Adam*. Never any but the first *Adam* in his Innocency could have fulfilled it; never any but the second *Adam*, our Lord *Jesus*, did perfectly fulfil it. *St. Paul* tells us of *τὸ ἀδύνατον τῶ νόμου*, *Rom. 8.* an impotency, nay an impossibility in the Law, by reason of sin. Indeed, when God first gave the Law, it was suitable to our strength, but sin infeeble us, and so the Law proved impossible to us. *St. Peter* tells us, *It was a Yoke that neither we, nor our Fathers could bear, Acts 15. 10.* Not only men in the state of Corruption, but the very Saints in the state of Regeneration, come short of it. Imperfection of grace, cannot attain to perfection of obedience. The Church of God defended this truth against the *Pelagians*; That the Law of God in the exactness of it, no meer man did ever fulfil it. There are two Dimensions in the Law;

1. The first is *maximum quod sic*, in doing of good, how full must that be? it must be *toto corde*, with our whole Heart.
2. The second is, *minimum quod non*, in declining from sin, how much must that be? 'tis, *Non concupisces*; not so much as to linger, or lust after it. Consider these two Dimensions, and it will make us confess with *David*, *I see an end of all perfection, but thy Law is exceeding large*; That's the first.

2. Take the Law in the lowest pitch of Righteousness, yet an unregenerate Man cannot obey it. He is so far from fulfilling all the Law, that he cannot perform the least part of it. Some outward Acts a meer natural man may do; *St. Paul* tells us, *They do by nature the things written in the Law*: but look to the Spiritual manner of performance, so no natural man can obey it in the least and lowest degree of it. Every Carnal man is reprobate to every good Work, *Tit. 1. 10.*

Love is the fulfilling of the Law: Perfect Love fulfils it perfectly; imperfect Love, doth it imperfectly; but without Love, there is no performance. You may as soon gather Grapes from Thistles, as any good Work from an unregenerate man. *Laudo fructum boni operis, sed in fide quæro radicem*, saith *St. Augustine*. If the Root be not good, which is Faith working by Love, the Fruit, though outwardly specious, is inwardly vicious. That's the second.

3. Consider the Law in the Evangelical Mitigation and Abatement of it; yet still the Saints of God find difficulty in it. - A regenerate man is two men. That which is spiritual, and renew'd in him, that readily conforms to the Law of God: *The Spirit is willing*, saith our Saviour; ey, but *the Flesh is weak*: Nay, oftentimes wilful, stubborn, and resisting. A Christian, indeed, is freed *à morte peccati*, from the Death of Sin; he hath a new Principle of Life put into him, that disposes him to an holy Obedience; but yet he is not freed *à morbo peccati*, from the Disease of Sin, that still hangs upon him, and that shrinks away, and withdraws it self from this due Obedience. A Christian hath both *Primitias Spiritus*, the First-fruits of the Spirit, they make him spiritual; and withal, he hath *Reliquias carnis*, some dregs of Flesh in him; they make him carnal, loth and listless to any holy Obedience.

Thus we see the Law,

1. In the highest pitch, 'tis impossible to the Saints;
2. In the lowest pitch, 'tis impossible to the Unregenerate;
3. Even in its moderation, 'tis difficult to the Best, in this imperfect State of Regeneration.

But yet 'tis most true what the Text affirms, *God's Commandments are not grievous*. His Service is no such hard Service as the World accounts it; 'tis no such Toil and Drudgery as Carnal men conceive it. 'Tis a Service indeed, (for
K k why

Serm. I why should we be left to a lawless liberty?) but 'tis an ingenuous service; *Take my yoke upon you, faith Christ, for my yoke is easie, and my burthen is light.* 'Tis Satans Policy to stave us off from God with this conceit; O, he is an hard Master, *duram servies servitutum*; farewell comfort and contentment, if he be your Master. Nay, verily, God's Servants find no such grievances in this employment; which will appear upon these three Considerations;

1. In respect of their State and Condition;
2. In respect of their task and employment;
3. In respect of their many encouragements which they meet with in this Service.

1. Look upon their state and condition: God's people are not in any base servile condition. But,

1. They are called into a state of Liberty; and Liberty, 'tis sweet in it self, and sweetens all our employments. It matters not so much what we do, as upon what terms we do it. If as Slaves and Bondmen, that embitters our work, and makes it grievous: If as free and ingenuous, it sweetens our employment. And such are all God's Servants. You have heard it often, *His Service is perfect freedom.* The Law they live under, 'tis call'd *A Law of Liberty*, *Jam. 1. 25.* Brethren, faith S. Paul, *Gal. 5. 13. you are called unto Liberty.* God's Servants must be no Bondmen. The Israelites were not to be Slaves, *for they are my Servants*, faith God, *Levit. 25.* Thus as Solomon made no Bond-men of the Children of Israel, *1 Kings 9. 22.* but put them into ingenuous services; so doth God with his Servants.

2. As it is a free, so it is an honourable Service: As we know, the greatness of the Master dignifies and ennobles the service that is done unto him. 'Tis the high Title that the Saints have gloried in, that they were God's Servants, and belonged to him. David gloried more in this, that he was God's Servant, than that he was Israel's King. So Theodosius. *Behold, Lord, I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid*, *Psal. 116.* He chose to be a Door-keeper in God's House. *Blessed is the Man whom thou chusest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts*, *Psal. 65. 4.* 'Tis an high dignity to be Gods menial Servant.

2. Look upon their task and employment, you shall find the Service of God, 'tis no such wearisome service.

1. The Work which God enjoyns them, 'tis possible to them. Gods Commandments are made possible to a regenerate man. *All things are possible to him that believes*, *Mark 9.* *I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me*, *Phil. 4. 13.* Flesh and Blood sees nothing in the Law of God but impossibility; like the unbelieving Spies, O we cannot conquer the Land. But Faith and Love, like Caleb and Joshua, conceive it may be done; and undertake it readily.

2. This Work is easie; I said it even now.

3. This Work, 'tis not only possible and easie, but pleasant and delightful. A good Christian finds exceeding great pleasure and sweetness in it. *A just man* (faith Solomon) *delights to do justly*; 'tis a joy to him, *Prov. 21. 15.* So, a good Christian delights in Piety. Thus David professes of himself, *I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy Law is within my Heart*, *Psal. 40. 8.* So St. Paul, *I delight in the Law of God in the inward man*, *Rom. 7.* Thus Solomon tells us, that the course of piety, 'tis a delightful Course; *All her ways are ways of pleasantness*, *Prov. 3. 17.* If Men serve and obey God, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasure, *Job 36. 11.* What Christ faith of himself, is true, in proportion, of all Gods Servants, *'Tis their meat and drink to do the will of God*, *Joh. 4.*

Look upon the several parts of Gods Service, those that are most tedious and

and irksom to a carnal man; God's Servants take great delight and felicity in them. *Serm. I.*

1. Prayer, and pouring out our Souls unto God, how dull a thing is it to a Carnal man. 'Tis as easie to make a Stone mount upward, as for a Carnal Man to raise up his Heart in Prayer, and to make it ascend up to the Throne of God. But *David* tells how delightful it was to him; *O my soul is filled as with marrow and fatness*, when he called upon God. 'Tis a Saint's Heaven upon Earth, to enjoy this Communion with God by devout Prayer.
2. Reading, and Hearing, and Meditating on God's Word; put a Carnal man upon it, 'O 'tis tedious and irksom to him; he presently cries out, *O what a weariness is at it*. Ey, but *David* counted God's Word *his song in the house of his pilgrimage*; esteem'd God's Word above *his appointed food*; it was the very Joy of his Heart.
3. The Lord's Day, and so the Attendance upon the Publick Worship, a Carnal man counts it but loss of time, he hath no list to it, he can tell how to spend that Day to better purpose; like those profane ones in *Amos 8*. *When will the Sabbath be gone?* But a good Christian counts it, and makes it his delight, *Isa. 58*. They rejoiced to hear the joyful Sound that call'd to the Solemn Assemblies, *Psal. 89*. What comfort did *David* take in it, when he went to the House of God with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holiday, *Psal. 42*.
4. Bounty to the Poor; What saith a Carnal man to it? Just as *Nabal*; *Shall I take my bread, and my flesh, and give it to I know not whom?* But the Saints delight in it: *He will devise liberal things*, as *Isaiah* describes him: *He will draw out his soul to the hungry, and satisfie the afflicted soul*, *Isa. 58*.

Even the most painful Works of Christianity, a good Christian delights in them. I will name but two:

1. Mortification, and suppressing our natural Lusts and evil Concupiscence. Flesh and Blood repines at that Work, but a good Christian delights in it. *The Spirit that is in him, lusts against the Flesh*, *Gal. 5. 17*. delights to cros it, to curb it, and keep it under.
2. The undergoing the Cross, and bearing of Afflictions; that saith hard to Flesh and Blood. Carnal men may seem to be Christians, *usque ad Crucem*, as *Luther* speaks; they will pass for good Christians, *usque ad Crucem*, till they spy the Cross. They will not suffer for Religion. But the Saints of God take delight in Persecutions. Hear what *St. Paul* saith, *2 Cor. 12. 10*. *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake*. And see it in the Apostles, *Acts 5*. *They rejoiced, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the Name of Christ*. All these hard and difficult Services, the Saints count them high and noble Functions, and delight in them.
3. Look upon the Encouragements that Christians find in the Service of God; they will make it appear, that the Service of God is no such irksom Service. The World indeed thinks otherwise of it; but *S. Bernard* gives the reason, *Vident punitiones nostras, sed non vident unctiones*. This makes the World think the Service of God to be an hard Service; they look upon the Labours, but they are not acquainted with the Comforts and Encouragements that sweeten these Labours, and make them pleasant to us. Many Encouragements there are.

1. His gracious Assistance. God helps and assists his Servants in all their Works. This he doth, by putting their Souls into a right frame of Holiness: *He answers us with strength in our soul*, *Psal. 138. 3*. Till then, the Faculties of our Souls are like the Members of our Bodies: when our Shoulder is out of Joint, every Burden is grievous; but put it into Joint again, and the same Burden will sit light upon it. So Grace sets us in a right frame, and makes the Law of

Serm. I. God conatural to us. That breeds delight, when we act according to Nature. A carnal man, set him to do a spiritual work, ye put him out of his element; but a spiritual man is spiritually affected.

2. A second Encouragement, is, God's merciful Connivence. When his Servants, that desire to serve him, yet fail, and fall short of what is their Duty, God winks at their Failings, and passes by them. See this graciously promised to us, *Mal. 3. 17. I will spare thee as a man spareth his own Son that serves him.* A loving Father will not quarrel for every Failing, if his Son doth his best; but wink and connive at him. Indeed, were it not for this, there were no serving of him. Did he not pass by our Failings, no Flesh would be saved. *If he should mark all that is done amiss, who may abide it? But there is mercy with him, that he may be feared.* *Psal. 130.* Thus the Prophet Micah admires God's gracious dealing with his Children, *Micah 7. 18. Who is a God like unto thee, that passes by the transgressions of his People?*

3. A third Encouragement, is, the many Heartnings and secret Chearings that God vouchsafes to his Servants, in the course of their Obedience. He is no churlish Nabal, sour and harsh to his poor Servants; but puts Life and Heart into them.

1. He vouchsafes his Presence to them, as *Boaz* to his Reapers. The Master's Eye, the Chearfulness of his Countenance, is the Man's Encouragement.

2. He speaks chearfully to their Hearts. He hath both his *Age*, and his *Edge* for them; *Go on;* and, *Well done, faithful servant.* Thus he heartned *S. Paul*, *Acts 18. 9. Be not afraid, Paul; for I am with thee, and no man shall hurt thee.* Which made him work out his Heart in the Service of Christ.

4. A fourth Encouragement, is, his loving Acceptance of our poor Services. Our faithful Endeavours, our honest Desires, our sincere Intentions, are graciously accepted.

1. He will accept Half-service for whole; imperfect Obedience goes for good Pay.

2. He will accept Endeavours for Performances. When we come short of the Work, yet if we went about it, put our strength to it, 'Tis well, faith God.

3. In some Cases, the Will shall stand for the Deed; *2 Cor. 8. If there be a willing mind, it is accepted.* He stands not upon a full Satisfaction, but makes up our Defects with a gracious Acceptation.

5. A fifth Encouragement, is, his bountiful rewarding of us; Besides the grand Payment, the Weight of Glory, the Reward of the Inheritance; a strange Payment, for Servants to have the Inheritance given them, *Coloss. 3. Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ;* that Pay will countervail all our Service, were it infinitely more: Besides that, How many encouraging Blessings and Favours doth he bestow upon his Servants, over and above? Besides their Wages, they have their Avails out of their Master's Bounty. *David* found it, and acknowledgeth it; *Thou hast dealt bountifully with thy servant.*

We serve a gracious Lord, such an one as delights in the Prosperity of his Servants. You see the Encouragements; take them all together.

1. Our Abilities to serve him, come from his Assistance.

2. Our Failings are made up by his Connivence.

3. Our Labours, they are sweetned by his chearful Countenance.

4. Our Unworthiness is supplied by his gracious Acceptance.

5. Our Reward shall be given us by his bountiful Goodness.

Think on these Encouragements, and thy Heart will confess, *Sure we serve a gracious Lord, his Commandments are not grievous.*

A FUNERAL SERMON

On 1 Kings xix. 4.

*It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my Life; for I am
not better than my Fathers.*



THE Several Aspects that this Passage and Speech of *Elijah* gives to the Meditations of those who have consider'd and dwelt upon it, occasion a diverse Apprehension and Judgment of the Nature and Purpose of it: some taking notice of some sudden Pangs and Qualms of Weakness and Discontent; others observing the Strength and Appearance of Piety. And indeed, *Tertullian's* Maxim holds good here, and is of universal truth, *In optimis nonnihil est pessimi*; The best, and most sanctified, and refined Saints, have some remainders and dregs of Infirmity and Imperfection; overtaken sometimes with Slips and Weaknesses.

See this holy Prophet, of so high a pitch of Piety, that he is accounted by some, not a mortal Man, but a glorious Angel, cloathed with Flesh; yet surpris'd with Humane and blamable Infirmities, and breaks forth here into an unadvised, sudden, passionate, both Fear and Wilt, *It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my Life; for I am no better than my Fathers.*

So that this Motion and Speech of *Elijah*, it is a mix'd Speech, made up of two several Ingredients:

1. Here is *φύσιον τι*, something natural, and carnal, favouring of Weakness; a Pang of Discontent and Weariness.

2. Here is *πνευματικόν τι*, something good and spiritual; though it be somewhat tainted with unseasonable Circumstances, yet separate the precious from the vile; purge and winnow it from the Chaff of some malignant Infirmities that attend it, and we shall find it a Speech truly Christian and Heroical, and of an eminent Pitch and Strain of Piety.

First, Look upon it as Natural, and Carnal, and favouring of Weakness. The very Carriage of the Prophet, the Context of this Scripture, and the unsuccessful Event, must make us suspect it as questionable, and doubtful: He hath a little forgot his Constancy and Courage; and *Jezabel's* Threatnings and Persecutions have cast him into some Fits and Grudgings of Fear and Infidelity. And this very Passage, I suppose, makes *S. James, Chap. 5. 17.* to take notice of *Elias*, as of a man of weakness and imperfection. *Elias*, saith he, was *ἁνθρωπίνος, a man subject to like passions as we are.* Let's not gaze and feed our Eyes with this Nakedness of the Prophet; go we backward, rather, and cover it; and, in one word, consider the Benefit of it, and Use, to our selves.

The Prophet is permitted to fail in this Particular, and his Failing is registred, and the Apostle takes notice of it;

1. *In honorem Elias*: 'Tis strange, but true; This blot of Infirmity, it serves for the Honour and Dignity of him. He was so eminent for Grace, in such a splendour of Sanctity, that purposely the Holy Ghost is fain to let us know he was a Man, lest we should deem him an incarnate Angel, his Piety was so conspicuous. The World could easilier discern Grace and Heavenly secrets in him, than Nature and Infirmity: So that the Prophet here, and the Apostle elsewhere, are

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glad to tell us, he was a frail creature. Thus it was with *Paul* and *Silas*, so glorious in their Words and Works, amongst the *Lystrians*, that they took them for Gods; and therefore the Apostles were enforced to confess, they were men subject to the same passions with them, *Acts 14:15*.

It is the glory of Religion, when it shines in its full strength; it makes their Faces shine like Angels. It may shame our weak glimmerings of Piety, so much overlaid with carnality and gross infirmities, that we need not doubt we are men, but question whether we are Christians.

2. *Elias*, and so the Saints appear in the Scripture clogg'd with infirmities to moderate their honour, lest it be excessive, and beyond bounds. Look upon them as Saints, but remember them frail Creatures. God purposely sets these Foils on his Saints, to allay our esteem of them. The Church of God in several ages hath had divers conflicts concerning the Saints, and their falls and infirmities. The *Manichees* in *St. Augustines* time, urged and exaggerated them, as if the God of the Old Testament had liked and allowed them; and *Moses* and the Scripture, had, by their report, authorized and approved them. They went too far, to infer, from the relation, the consequence of approbation. Contrary, the *Papists* now excuse and extenuate them, as if there had been no need, that the God of the New Testament should pardon and remit them. They denied them to be Saints; these deny them to be men. We must go a middle way; Reverence their Sanctity, Pity their Infirmities: Learn to distinguish *inter puritatem fontis, & impuritatem vasis*. They have their flaws, and slips, and foils, that *Christ* only may be King of Saints, and the holy one of Israel.

3. *Elias*, and the Saints appear to us in infirmities, to teach and assure us the possibility of imitation. Naturally, we are ready to put off these examples of the Saints in Scripture: What talk you of *Elias*? or *Moses*? or *Paul*? These were Saints; we must not think to come near them. Thus we set them aloft, and beyond imitation, as Half-gods; whereas the Scripture presents them as men of our size. Thus the *Israelites* gave over the hope of winning of *Canaan*; Oh! they are Giants, we are Grass-hoppers. No such matter. *Elias* had his passions and weaknesses; and though he was eminent, yet not transcendent, but within the Sphere and compass of imitation. 'Tis a policy of Satan, to stave us off from imitation of the Saints, by a fond superstitious admiration of them.

But my aim and purpose is to look upon this speech,

Secondly, As sever'd from passionate and unseasonable Infirmities; and to set it in just, and due circumstances: and then it is a speech of admirable Piety.

The words are a Suit, and Request, made by the Prophet for his death, and dissolution; he made request for himself that he might die.

In it observe two Particulars;

1. The Suit it self, *O Lord take away my life*.

2. A double Meditation that works him to this desire and request for Death.

1. Is a full contentation, and present satiety; *Satis est, It is enough*.

2. Is an apprehension of his natural condition and frailty, *I am no better than my Fathers*.

First, For his forwardness to die, and motion he makes for it. Conceive it in three Particulars:

1. *Optat*; Here is an holy Wish.

2. *Orat*; That's more; he makes an holy Supplication.

3. *Resignat*; He yields himself up to God in an holy Resignation.

I. *Optat*; He expresses his willingness, he wishes to die. For fuller understanding of his willingness to die, let us consider,

1. The Nature of it.

2. The Grounds, and Occasions of it.

3. The Evidences, and Strength, and Power of it.

1. The Nature of it. To Flesh and Blood it is a strange Paradox, that Death should come within the compass of a Wish; whereas Nature, and Reason,

son, and Religion too, all seem to lead us to the preservation and maintenance of our Life, and Being. 'Tis true, and yet *Elia* his case is here allowable, and of ordinary use and practice too. The Saints of God may, and are willing to die, and wish for it; but yet with these Caveats:

1. *Caveat*. In these wishes for Death, they apprehend Death in a limited Consideration;

1. In the apprehension of Nature, as it is a state and condition of Separation and Destruction; so we all shrink at it, and flee from it. 'Tis that impression that God hath planted in us, a care to preserve, and maintain our Being. Death thus apprehended, makes *David* beg respite, *Psal. 39. 13. O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.* *Psal. 6. 5. In death there is no remembrance of thee.* This makes *St. Paul* sigh and groan. We would not be unclothed of this Garment of our Flesh, but enter immediately into immortality. Nay, amongst others, even this apprehension made *Christ* with escapal and deliverance. He fear'd, and wish'd, and begg'd escapal.

2. In the apprehension of Religion; as Death comes with a malediction, that makes it dreadful. Were Death only a consequent of Nature, or a contingency of Fortune, or a contrivance of Man, some more manly resolutions may willingly undergo it. But as it is the stroke of Gods anger and indignation, that heads the Arrow and Dart of Death, and as it is attended with that train of Evils and Curses that follow Death, that's matter of horror. To see Death on a Pale-Horse, is dismal, *Rev. 6. 8.* but to see Hell following after him, that's dreadful. To look into the Grave, and see the Worm of Corruption, 'tis sad; but to look lower, and to see that never-dying Worm, gnawing, and consuming, that's unsufferable. Thus it is not desirable: But then,

3. In the apprehension of Faith, we find Death altered and changed; nay, sanctified and sweetned to us; made useful and advantageous, and so it is acceptable and desirable. Death in its own nature, is Gods Serjeant and Officer; the appearance of such an one to a Debtor, or Malefactor, is fearful, and they run from him; but to a Friend, or Acquaintance, he is a messenger of love, and we willingly admit of him. This Officer comes to a Christian, not to arrest, or attach him, but lovingly to invite him. 'Tis made an inlet into Heaven, a passage to Eternity: *Oh, When shall I come and appear before God!*

2. *Caveat*. The Saints desires of Death are always conceiv'd with a limitation of submission to Gods Will, and Appointment. In this case, *St. Bernard* gives us a good rule of conformity to Gods Will and Pleasure. He makes a threefold subjection of these desires to God:

1. Is, *Quod certum est Deum nolle, execremur nos*: When Gods negative is clear and express, he rejects our desires; we must yield and give over: As it was with *Moses*, he begg'd often of God to go into *Canaan*; at last, God gives his peremptory denial, *Speak no more to me of this matter*; and *Moses* gave over.

2. Is, *Quod certum est Deum velle, velimus & nos*: When Gods Will is express and absolute, then we must absolutely desire it. When God did definitively appoint *Moses* to die, *Go up to the Mount, and die*; *Moses* yields presently: *He died according to the word of the Lord, Deut. 34. 5.*

3. Is, *Quod incertum est, utrum velit, an nolit; neque velimus ex toto, neque non velimus, neutri parti nimis inhaereamus*: When his Will, for Life or Death, is hidden, and secret, then we must bring down our desires from an absolute Petition, to an humble and submissive Subordination. Thus that good Bishop in *St. Bernard*, tempers his desires and prayers for Death; *Domine, si adhuc populo tuo sum necessarius, non recuso laborem; fiat voluntas tua; desiderio requiem, non recuso laborem.*

3. *Caveat*. The Saints desires of Death are limited, and stinted with an holy moderation. In this case, what the School-men resolve of *Christ's* desire of Life, we may conclude of the Saints desire of Death; it was an act of his *δύναμις*, not of his *βίαιον*; it was a moderate willingness, not a resolute Will: As

St. Paul

Serm. I

St. Paul expresses it, 2 Cor. 5. 8. *a uolunt, they had rather, Phil. 1. 23. a κρείττον, it is better to die.* These Desires of Death, are not so much an *invidia*, what they purpose and fix upon, as an *invidia*, what is pleasing and acceptable. As Gerson expresses it; they have *morem in desiderio*, but yet they have *vitam in patientia*; they desire Death, but they will with patience endure Life. Ask St. Paul what he wishes, what is his Choice and Longing? Oh! to die; it is his *πολλὴ μά- λον κρείττον*. Ask him what he wills; that's to abide still, as God sees cause.

You have seen the nature of *Elias* his willingness to die:

See now,

1. What occasions this willingness in *Elias* to die. Besides those main Grounds that work the Hearts of God's Children to desire Death, and to wish it with comfort; as,

1. That the Power and Sting of Death is vanquish'd, and swallowed up in Victory.

2. That Christ's Death hath freed us from the fear of it.

3. That Death puts a blessed end to all Sin and Corruption.

4. That it opens unto us a blessed entrance into Glory. Besides these, the Spirit of *Elias* is wrought to this willingness, and desire of Death, upon these Occasions.

1. *Tedio afflictionum.* *Elias* his Life was beset with many Vexations and Afflictions, the hatred of the whole Kingdom was upon him; he was a man whose Life was imbitter'd with Sorrows. This one blessed End and Issue of Afflictions, they wear us from the desire of Life. Prosperity glues us to this Life, Afflictions loosen us. *O mors, quam amara!* How bitter is Death when we are at ease! *O mors, quam iucunda!* How pleasant is it when we are in Torments! These *minores mortes* fit us for the great Death. S. Paul's fighting with Beasts at Ephesus, made him willing to grapple with this. When the Soul of Man finds no footing on outward things, then it wishes it had the Wings of a Dove, that it might fly away, and be at rest. Happy Afflictions, that fit us for Death.

2. Grief for the Miseries of the Church; That goes nearer. In private Sufferings a Christian can be more contented, when it goes well with the Publick; but if the Church lies under Misery, that makes an *Elias* to call for Death. Old *Eli*, who digested well enough his private Sorrow, yet, when the Ark was taken, *He fell off from the seat backward, and he died.* The Saints are loth to see evil days, to outlive the Prosperity of God's People. *The Lord shall make thee see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy days.*

3. *Sensus impotentiae*; An apprehension of an Inability to do any more good. *Elias* was tired and wearied out with the gainfaying of Idolaters, he had conflicted with their Obstinacy: *Ahab* is hardned, *Jezabel* enraged, *Baal* restored, God's Prophets are persecuted; he sees no Success of all his Pains, he is weary of his Life. As the Soul in the Body, if it be hindered of Action, it forsakes the Body presently; so the Spirit of *Elias* finding he could not prevail, it desires to relinquish an ungrateful World, and to retire to Heaven.

4. *Prægnus cæli*; The anticipation and feeling of those Joys, of that Rest and Bliss, whets the Appetite of *Elias*, to desire Possession and Fruition of them. If there be so much Comfort in *lumine Prophetiae*, how much more is there in *lumine gloriæ*? If Mount Carmel, and the Visions there, be so ravishing, what is God's high and holy Mountain, and those Revelations? No question, S. Paul's Rapture bred in him an high measure of heavenly-mindedness. If the assistance of one Angel, feeding the Prophet, was so ravishing, what will be the Society of innumerable Angels? If Communion with God upon Earth be so gladfom, how unspeakable will Communion in Heaven be? *Si bonus es, Domine, animæ quærenti, quanto magis inuenienti?*

These were the Grounds and Occasions of *Elias* his willingness to die.

But,

3. What Evidences of this willingness to die will appear in God's Children, and what is the Strength and Power of it?

i. It

1. It will appear in encouraging them against the forethoughts of death; the thoughts of death are not ghastly to them. Their frequent meditations and desires of it, make them acquainted with it, and familiar to them. *Nemo timet facere, quod se novit bene didicisse. Gerson.*

2. It will free them from dismayedness at the approach of Death, make them willing to entertain it. Gods calling them to Death, they presently hear. *Non clamores tantum, sed susurros divinos statim percipiunt.* The very beckoning of God's hand makes them hasten to him. It was no more 'twixt *Moses* and God, but, *Go up and die.* Thus *Saint Paul*, tell him of Bonds, I care not for Death, saith he.

3. It will bear them out in the conflict and onset of death. Makes a Christian smile at the face of it. How peaceably died *Jacob, Aaron, Moses* and *Simeon*? As *Saint Bernard* of *Christ's* yielding up the Ghost, *Quis tam facile, quando vult, Dormiunt?*

4. It makes them triumph over the most tormenting, and cruel deaths. The three Nobles in *Daniel* slighted the Furnace; Martyrs kissed the Stake; they would not accept of deliverance; like valiant Souldiers that are desirous to be put upon desperate Services.

That's the first, *Orat*; *Elias* wishes to die, so willing is he to it.

II. *Orat*; He makes his Prayer that he might die; That imports more.

1. Prayer, is a deliberate desire. Sudden wishes vanish, and die in us. Many have some pangs of mortification, and leaving the World, as *Balaam* had; but would be loth God should take them at their word, like him in the Fable. No; *Elias* and a Saint goes further; it is their deliberate wish. All things considered, they judge it best for them, they exercise their Hearts towards it, waiting with *Job*, groaning with *St. Paul*, begging with *Simeon*, their dissolution.

2. Prayer, it is a religious desire, a matter of devotion, and holy supplication, rendred to God, framed into their Prayer. A natural man, or a wicked man may have wishes to die, and deliberations. So had *Achitophel*, and *Judas*; but they presented not these desires in prayers to God. The Saints die like *Joab*, at the horns of the Altar, by Prayer sacrificing their lives to God; like old *Simeon*, brought by the Spirit into the Temple, and there praying for Death.

3. Prayer, it is a restrained desire. Prayer extends the Will, but restrains the Power. He is willing to die, *Oh that I had Wings like a Dove!* but is not the disposer of his Life to part with it at pleasure. Were our Lives our own, we need not beg leave of God to lay them aside. His Petition, 'tis a real Confession, that our Time is in God's hand, not in our own. We may be Waiters, and Suiters, and in desires Hastners, but not Executioners of our own Death. As *Gregory* saith, we must, like *Elias*, be in ore spelunca, or in ostio Tabernaculi; with *Abraham*, ready to receive Death, not to hasten it to us. In Preparation we must hasten, not in Execution. Our hastning must not prevent God's coming; *Hastning to the coming of our Lord Jesus*, 2 Pet. 3. 12. not before his coming. That's the second, *Orat*.

III. *Resignat*; Take away my life; it is an Act of Resignation. He directs, and renders, and resigns it up to him; and that upon divers Reasons:

1. *Ob jus dominii*; He yields up his Life to God, as the Lord of it. *No man lives to himself, and no man dies to himself; whether we live, we live to the Lord; whether we die, we die to him; whether therefore we live or die, we are the Lords,* Rom. 14. 7. placed here in our Stations. The Issues of Life belong unto him. We are not Masters of our Time, or Life. *David* served his time according to the counsel of God. Old *Simeon* begs his Dismission.

2. *Ob fidem depositi*. He commits his Life to be kept in the Hands of God. The Saints in their Death do not utterly relinquish, and for ever depart with Life, but they depositate and entrust God with it. Thus *Tertullian*, Our Life is, in deposito apud Deum, per fidelissimum sequestrem Dei & hominum *Jesus Christum*. Those things that I have committed to him, he will keep. Our Lives, they are the Pledge of our Faith we leave in God's Hand. Thus *David* puts his Life into God's hand; *My time is in thy hand; deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me,* Psal. 31. 1. So our Saviour, Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit.

Serm. I.

3. *Ob Specialitatem modi.* It is strange; being in the fear of Death, he begs Death; he flies for his Life, and yet he flies from it; desires to die, to escape Death. True, but this Suit of his is, for the special manner of his Death and Dissolution.

1. *Ut non violenta, sed placida morte.* He desires to escape *Jezebel's Cruelty*; begs of God to dispose of him to a peaceable Death and Dissolution. Deliver my darling from the power of the dog, *Psal. 22. 20.* An *evdavia*, it is *inter beneficia*; a Favour, and a Blessing, to be asked and sought for. 'Twas granted to *Josiah*, to die in peace; so to *Hezekiah*. *Job* accounts it a Blessing to die in his nest, *Job. 29. 18.* *David* desires to fall into the hands of God, rather than into the hands of men. Bless God, that we can close our Brethrens Eyes in peace; that they are gathered into the Barn, like ripe Corn, by the Sickle of Death, not by the Sword of an Enemy.

2. *Ut honesta, non probrosa morte.* Take thou my life away, let not *Jezebel* have her will on me. 'Tis an honest and honourable wish, *Decore cadere*; as *Saul*, That the *Philistines* mock me not, *1 Sam. 31. 4.* Not to have the Death of a Dog, or the Burial of an Ass. 'Tis that which the Church bewails, *Psal. 79. 2.* The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy Saints unto the beasts of the earth. Those two Witnesses in the Revelations, whom spiritual *Jezebel* slays, she suffers their dead Bodies to lie unburied in the Streets of that great City.

3. *Ut non in Deum contumeliosa morte, sed honorifica moriatur*; that he might die such a Death, as God be not dishonoured by it. It was the trial of *Baal's* Deity, that he could not rescue his Priests from Destruction. *Jezebel* hath sworn by her false Gods, that *Elijah* shall suffer. See now, it stands God upon, in point of Honour, to rescue *Elias*; and *Elias* begs such a Death, as might not make *Jezebel* blaspheme and insult over God. 'Tis the desire of God's Children to die for the greatest advantage of God's Glory, That God might be magnified in their bodies by life or death. Thus it is said of *Christ's* Prediction of *St. Peter's* Death, by what manner of death he should glorify God. Is Martyrdom the way of glorifying God? The Saints run to it. Ey, but it will make the Enemies of God insult the more: *Elias* prays against it; *Athanasius* fled from it. They desire to die for the greatest purpose, that their Deaths may be precious and rich.

So much for the first, *Elias* his willingness to die. Now follow, Secondly, The two Meditations that work him to this willingness. To speak of one of them onely; and that's an holy Satiety, *Satis est, It is enough.* Take it in these four Expressions;

1. *Satis vitæ meæ*; It is enough, Lord; I have lived long enough. The Saints of God can let a full period, they can stint their desires of longer Life; they wish not an Eternity here. A worldly man, Oh, he could part with another Life, might this Life last always. No, 'tis God's Blessing to his Children, they are satisfied with length of days, *Psal. 92. 16.*

2. *Satis mundo*; They have enough of the World too. The Comforts of this Life, the Pleasures, Profits, Preferments, they can stop and stay at them too, refusing with *Barzillai* the Offers of Preferment. How shameful is it for old men to thirst after Riches and Honours! like the two Tribes, content to stay on this side *Jordan*, for the goodness of the Country?

3. *Satis officio*; He hath finished and fulfilled his Course, that makes him willing to die; he hath accomplished his Ministry. Happy they whose work is done, before their Day be done. The ability of giving a good account of our Service, is the powerfullest Encouragement to be willing to die. Thus *St. Chrysostom* observes, in compare of these two places; *St. Paul's* escapal out of *Damascus*, and his readiness to die at *Jerusalem*; Then he had done no Service, so he was loth to die; now *Paul* the aged had finished his Course, then he is ready for Bonds and Death. So *Christ*, till his Work was finished; hid himself; after, he offered himself to them.

4. *Satis miraculosæ providentiæ*; 'Tis enough for that too. He hath been mightily and miraculously preserved and delivered hitherto, he will not thrust himself

himself upon more miraculous ways ; 'Tis enough, Lord, now end my Life. *Non vult oneri esse misericordiae divinae* ; he will not be burdensome to the Mercy of God. The Apostles were sparing of Miracles for their own selves, wrought none in their own behalf ; they valued not Life at the rate of a Miracle ; accounted themselves less than an ordinary Mercy. Serm. I.

For this Christian Brother of ours, whose blessed Death and Departure we are now met together (not so much to lament and bewail, as) to celebrate and honour ; much, very much may be spoken of him, to the glory of God's rich Grace in him, and the embalming of his Name with a precious Memory. But the Applause and Welcome that the Saints and Angels give to him in Heaven, and those blessed *Euge's* that the Author and Finisher of his Faith hath received him with, are the true and full Commendation that his Soul rests in. Onely, in a few words, know, That the Death of this Good Man, as it is in God's Eyes, so in ours it must be honourable and precious.

And because S. Bernard's Rule is true, *Preciosa mors Sanctorum, quam commendat vita pretiosa* ; you all witness with me, who have lived with him, that his Carriage hath been such as becomes a man professing the Fear of God. What his Life was from his Minority, most of you know better than my self: Onely I have had always the report of it to be upright and unblameable.

I found him at my coming the chief Credit and Improvement of the worthy Pains of my Reverend Predecessor ; at whose Feet he a long time sate, as a good Proficient. And since my being here, I have remarkably taken notice of him, as a great Encouragement of mine unworthy Labours.

His Piety, and Course of Godliness, hath witness of all men, and of the Truth it self : Which was,

1. Timely, and not put off with delays. He often blessed God, that called him so timely, not suffering him to linger till the evil day. That had not been so comfortable.

2. It was observable to his own Heart ; It was not wrought secretly, but (as he imparted to me) Piety found him averse ; and it was not without some enforcement used, that he was drawn to that Sermon which gave the first successful knock at his Heart.

3. It was constant ; witness his diligence, and timely forwardness to repair to the House of God ; his attention, reverence, devotion there, observed by others who preached occasionally.

4. It was judicious, not groundless, but intelligent ; able he was to give a Reason of his Faith. He was exercised in the Study of the Scriptures, and Grounds of Religion ; able to speak understandingly.

5. It was substantial, not languishing away in Circumstances and Trifles. He professed in his Sickness, that the Disputes about Inconformity were of no use for Piety, and that the Power of Religion was not in them.

6. It was diffusive ;

1. Into all his Life.
2. Into his Family and Children.
3. Into his Friends and Familiars.
4. In an unquestion'd Honesty to all men.

7. It was solid and strong, bearing him up in this long, tedious, and oft-times very sharp and violent Sickness.

1. The Apprehensions of his Faith were constantly quick and comfortable ; he felt not the least nibbling of Satan.
2. His Patience was admirable and heroical.
3. His Charity in spending himself in fruitful Conferences, and Persuasions to those about him, was great and bountiful.

8. It was crowned with Perseverance ; which God did not only secretly bestow upon him, but with feeling and assurance he triumphed in it. One of his last Speeches was, *Satan may as well pluck God out of Heaven, as pluck my Soul out of his keeping.*